

# THORGAL



**The Master of the Mountains**

**ROSINSKI - VAN HAMME**

*Rosinski*

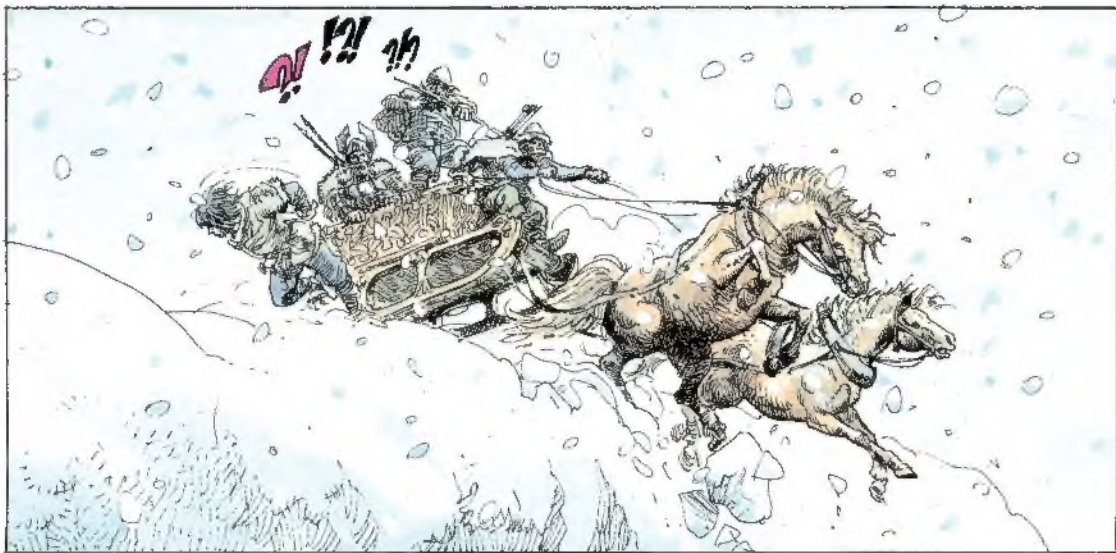




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## The Master of the Mountains



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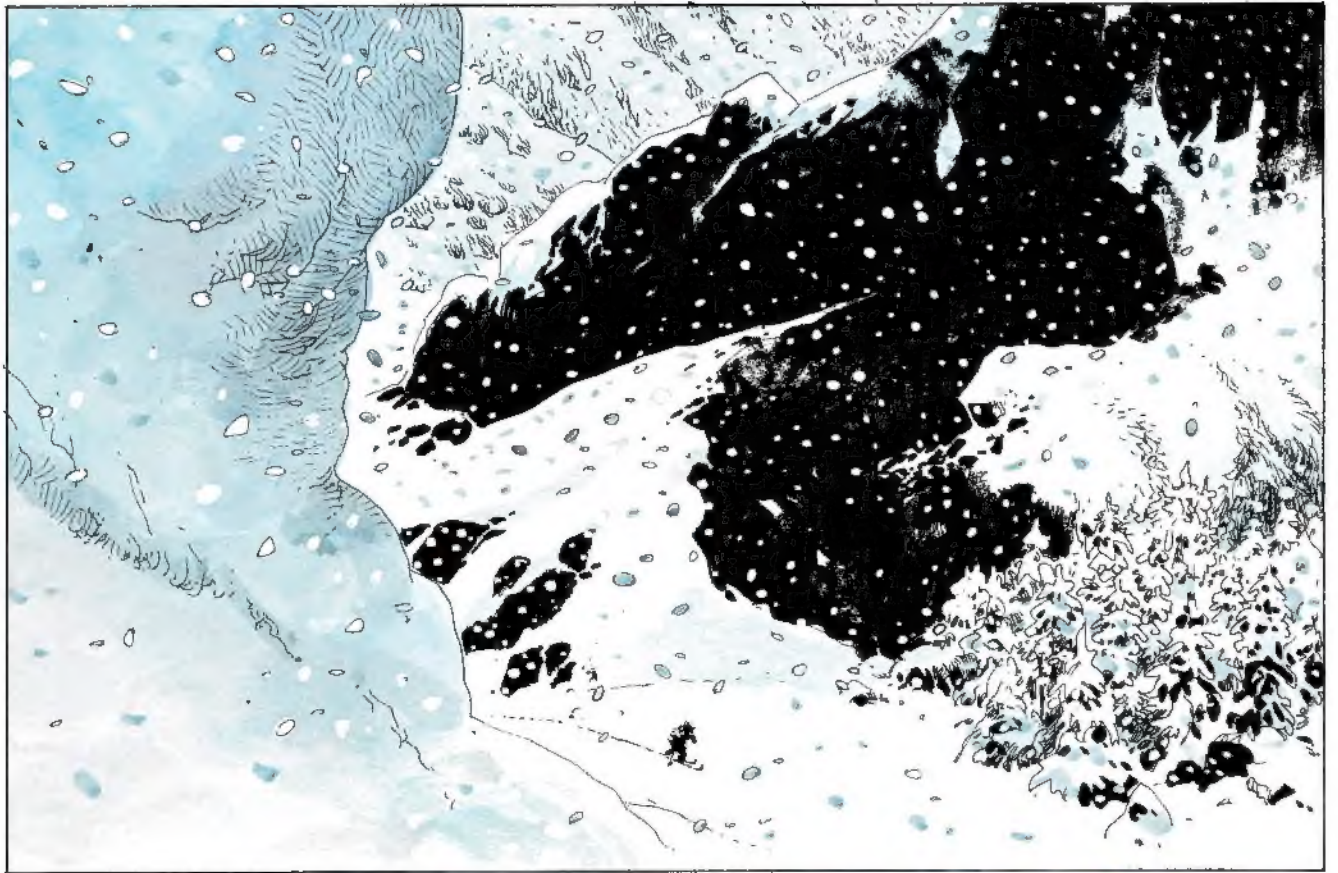
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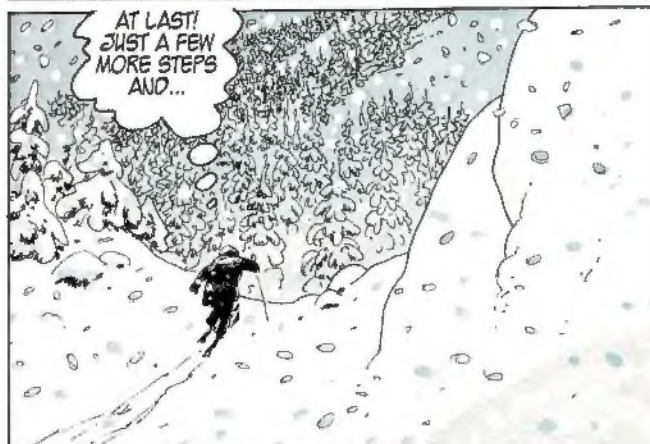
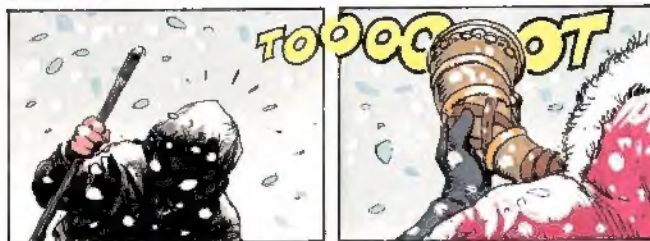
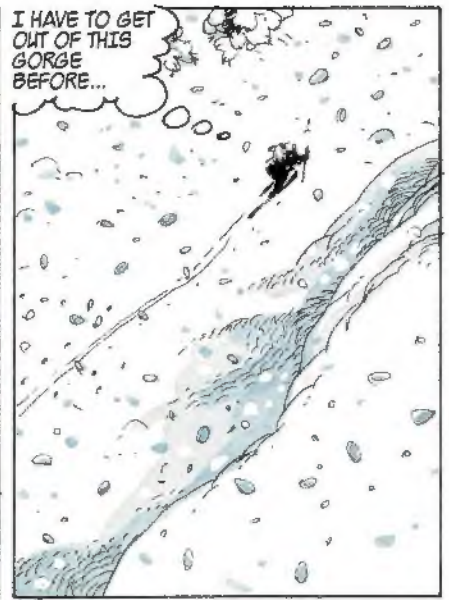
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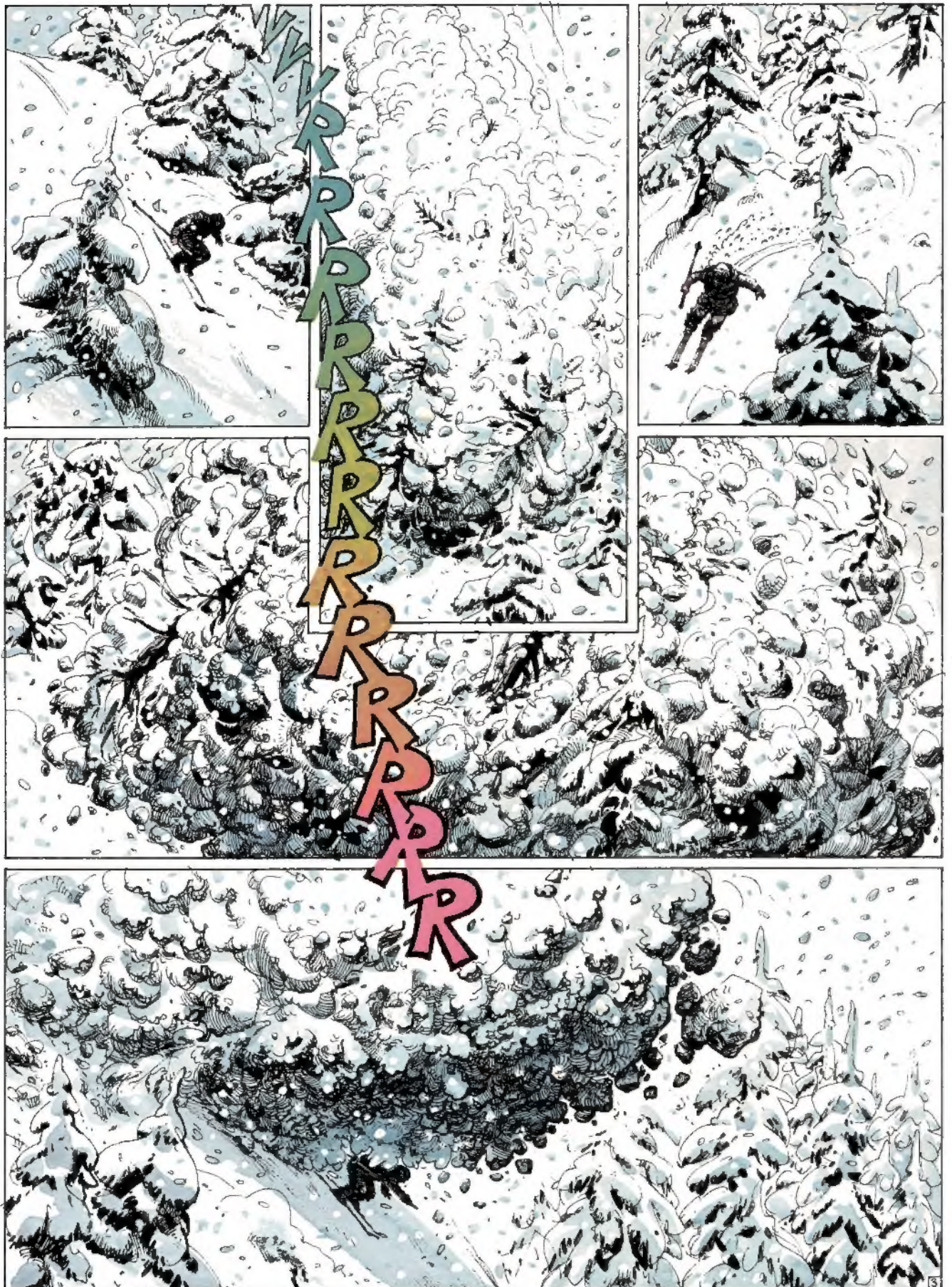
















WHAT DID I TELL YOU, MY FRIEND... A FEW HUNDRED MORE PAGES, AND WE'D BE UNDER THAT.

THE PROBLEM IS THAT IT'S TOO LATE TO TRY GETTING AROUND THAT TODAY.

WELL, AT LEAST IT HAS STOPPED SNOWING.



BUT A SHELTER FOR THE NIGHT WOULDN'T BE UNWELCOME. I'M SOAKED. MAYBE THERE'S ONE IN THE VILLAGE UP THERE.



JUST A BIT FURTHER, MY FRIEND! I CAN ALREADY SMELL SOME GOOD SUPPER, SERVED FIRESIDE BY A CHEERFUL MOUNTAIN MAIDEN WITH PLUMP ARMS...











MY... MY NAME IS TORRIC. YOU DON'T HAVE ANYTHING TO EAT, DO YOU? I'M DYING OF HUNGER.

ALL RIGHT. I'LL JUST PUT MY HORSE IN THE SHEEPFOLD NEXT DOOR, AND I'LL TAKE CARE OF THE MEAL.



A RABBIT I SHOT THIS AFTERNOON. THERE'S ENOUGH FOR TWO HERE. SO, WHO IS THIS SAXEGAARD YOU SEEM SO AFRAID OF?

PEOPLE FROM AROUND HERE CALL HIM THE MASTER OF THE MOUNTAINS. HE'S THE CHIEF OF A BAND OF PILLAGERS WHO'VE BEEN HOLDING THE WHOLE REGION TO RANSOM. EVEN THE COASTAL VIKINGS AVOID COMING TO MEET HIM IN HIS MOUNTAINS.

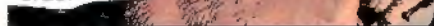


I'VE NEVER HEARD OF HIM. BUT I LEFT THIS COUNTRY A LONG TIME AGO.

HE'S BUILT HIMSELF A SORT OF FORTRESS FIVE DAYS FROM HERE AND LEADS HIS MEN LIKE A REAL ARMY. WHEN SAXEGAARD DEEMS THAT THEY NEED SOME EXERCISE, HE SENDS THEM OUT TO PILLAGE ONE TOWN OR ANOTHER, TO MASSACRE THE INHABITANTS WHO TRY TO RESIST THEM.



THE LEAST UGLY WOMEN AND THE CHILDREN ARE TAKEN AS SLAVES. THAT'S WHAT HAPPENED TO ME WHEN I WAS 10 YEARS OLD. A SLAVE IN THE KITCHENS, THEN IN THE FORGE. UNTIL FIVE DAYS AGO, WHEN I MANAGED TO ESCAPE AFTER STEALING SOME SKIS.



FREEDOM IS THE ONLY THING WORTH FIGHTING FOR. WHAT DOES THIS SAXEGAARD LOOK LIKE?

I DON'T KNOW. I'VE ONLY EVER SEEN HIM FROM A DISTANCE. BUT THERE'S ONE THING I'M SURE ABOUT: ANYONE AS DANGEROUS AS HIM CAN ONLY BE HORRIBLY UGLY.



OH, I'M SORRY. I... I DIDN'T LEAVE YOU ANY...



I SAW. TOMORROW MORNING I'LL TRY TO KILL TWO RABBITS! WHAT HAPPENED TO YOUR HAND?

LAST NIGHT I WAS ATTACKED BY TWO WOLVES THAT MUST HAVE BEEN AS HUNGRY AS ME. I MANAGED TO PUSH THEM BACK, BUT ONE OF THEM NEARLY RIPPED OFF MY TWO FINGERS.



SHOW ME.

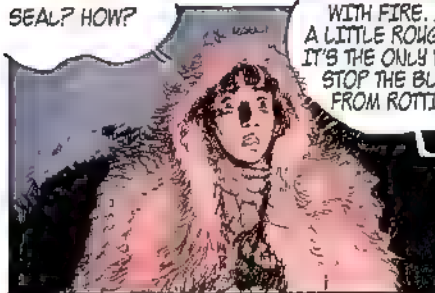


THE WOUND  
OPENED AGAIN  
WHEN I HID  
UPON HEARING  
YOU COMING



YOUR TWO FIN-  
GERS ARE DONE  
FOR! TORRIC, WE  
HAVE TO AMPUTATE  
THEM. AND YOU  
MAY LOSE YOUR  
ARM IF WE DON'T  
SEAL THAT CUT  
RIGHT NOW.

SEAL? HOW?



WITH FIRE. IT'S  
A LITTLE ROUGH, BUT  
IT'S THE ONLY WAY TO  
STOP THE BLOOD  
FROM ROTTING.



A RING...  
MADE OF A  
STRANGE  
MATERIAL...  
IS IT  
YOURS?



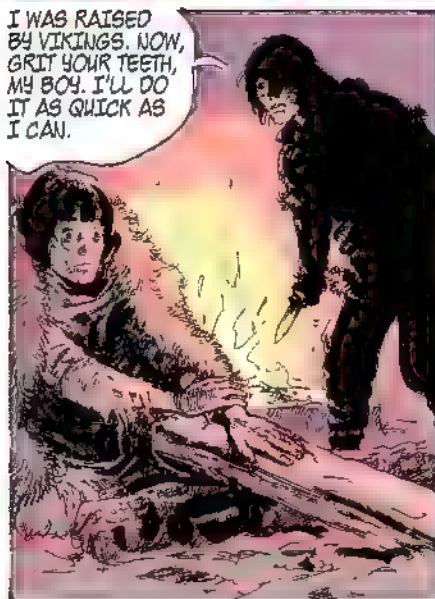
NO!

OK, WE'LL LOOK AT  
IT LATER. SO, HAVE  
YOU DECIDED?



I... I  
TRUST  
YOU.

I WAS RAISED  
BY VIKINGS. NOW,  
GRIT YOUR TEETH,  
MY BOY. I'LL DO  
IT AS QUICK AS  
I CAN.



YOU...  
YOU WANT  
TOP...

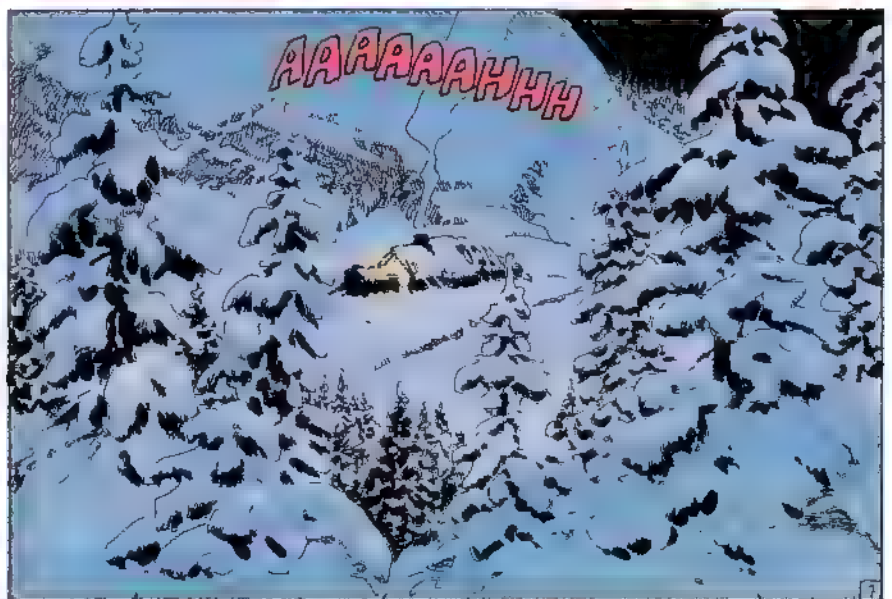


IT'S NOT  
SOMETHING  
I PARTICULARLY  
WANT TO DO AND  
I CAN'T FORCE  
YOU TO DO  
IT, TORRIC,  
BUT  
HEY, WHAT'S  
THAT?

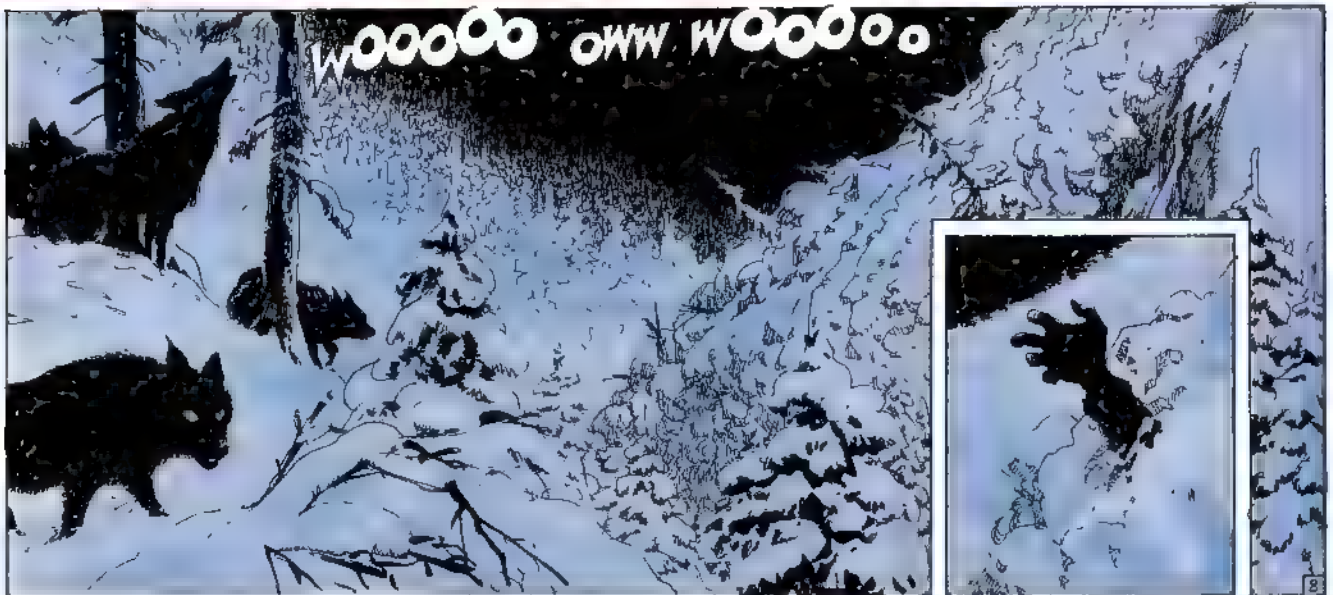
GOOD. PUT YOUR HAND DOWN  
FLAT ON HERE. BY THE WAY,  
MY NAME IS THORGAL  
AGGRISON!



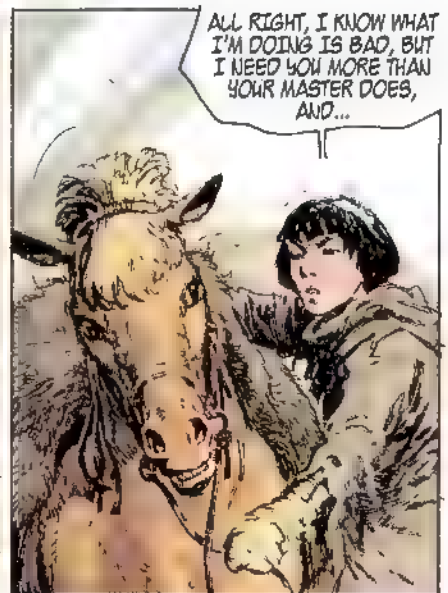
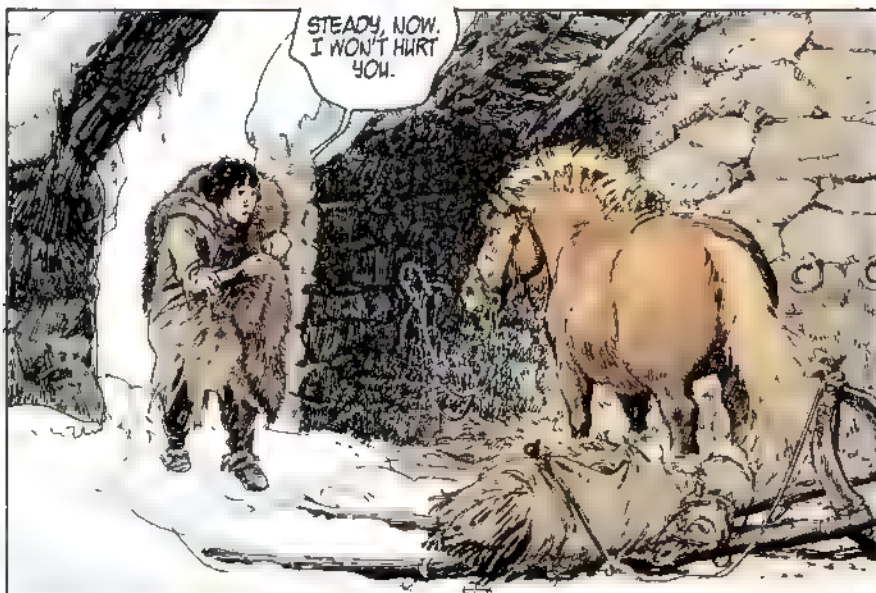
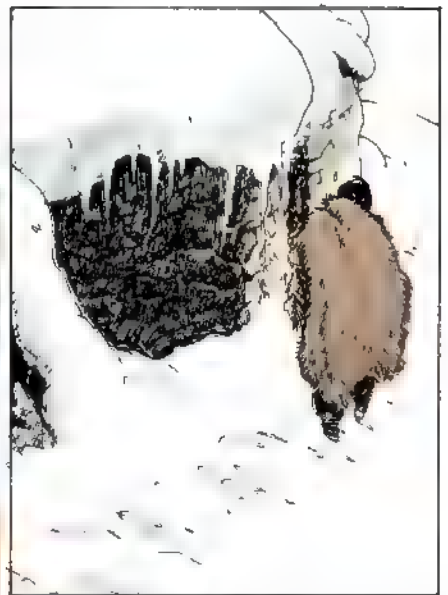
THAT'S A  
VIKING NAME...  
ARE YOU A  
VIKING?







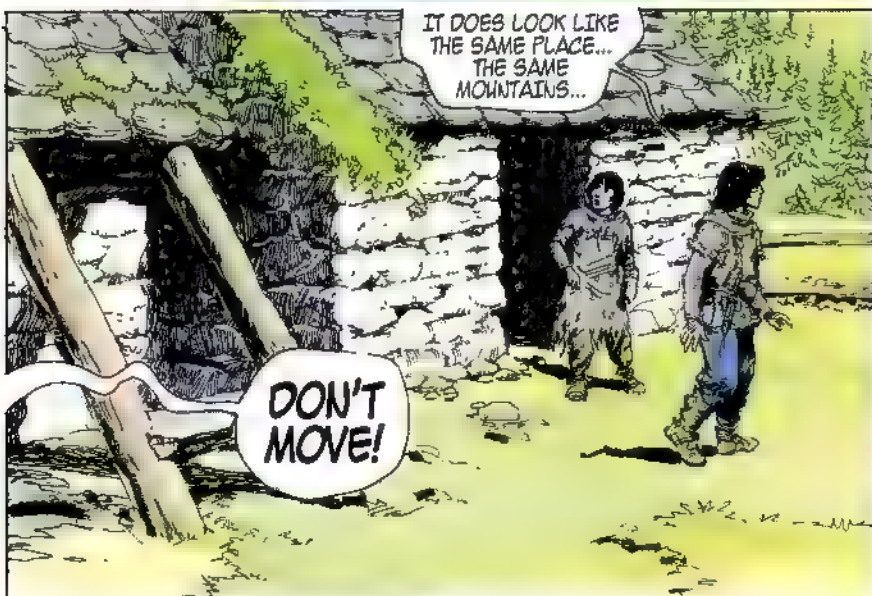










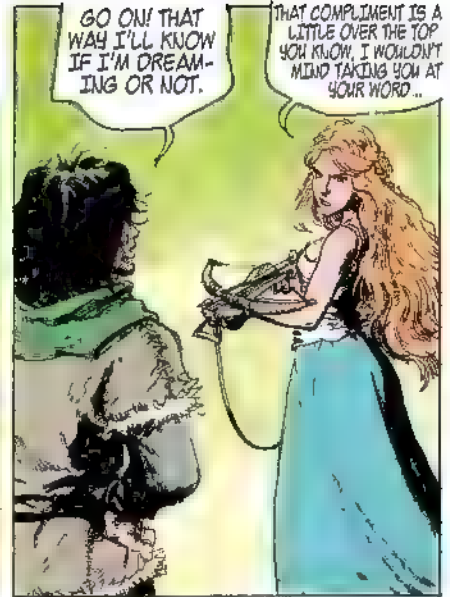






MY NAME IS THORGAL AND MY COMPANION'S NAME IS TORRIC. I'D HAVE TROUBLE EXPLAINING HOW WE GOT HERE, BUT I CAN ASSURE YOU THAT YOU HAVE NOTHING TO FEAR FROM US.

DON'T MOVE OR I'LL SHOOT.



GO ON! THAT WAY I'LL KNOW IF I'M DREAMING OR NOT.

THAT COMPLIMENT IS A LITTLE OVER THE TOP YOU KNOW, I WOULDN'T MIND TAKING YOU AT YOUR WORD...

BUT YOU DON'T SEEM LIKE ONE OF THOSE RAG-WEARING PILLAGERS WE NORMALLY SEE AROUND HERE. YOU'RE QUITE THE OPPOSITE, GIVEN HOW MUCH YOU'VE GOT ON IN THIS SEASON.

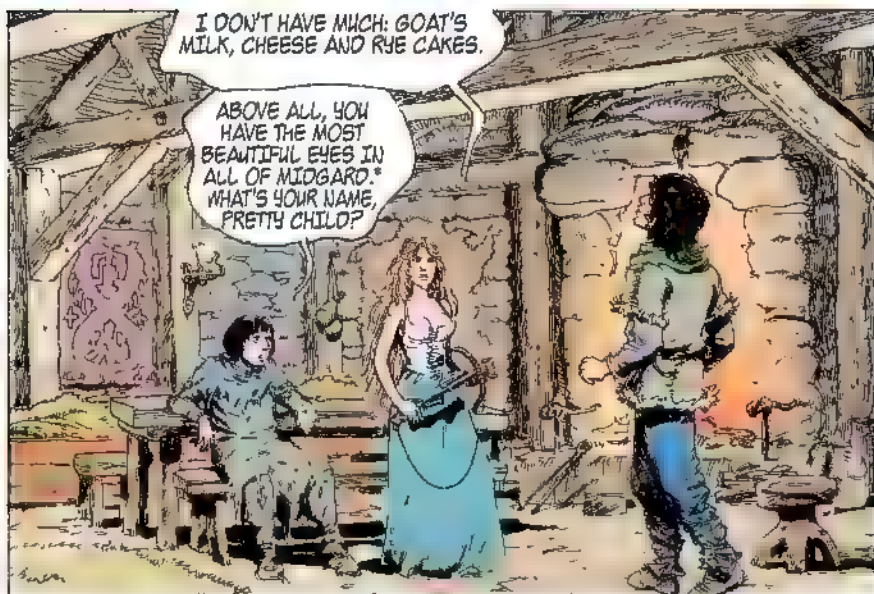


YOUR COMPANION, ON THE OTHER HAND, IS MORE DOUBTFUL. WHERE'D YOU PICK THIS ONE UP? IN A PIGSTY?

IF... IF YOU COULD OFFER US SOMETHING TO EAT... WE'D BE BETTER ABLE TO CHAT, WOULDN'T WE?

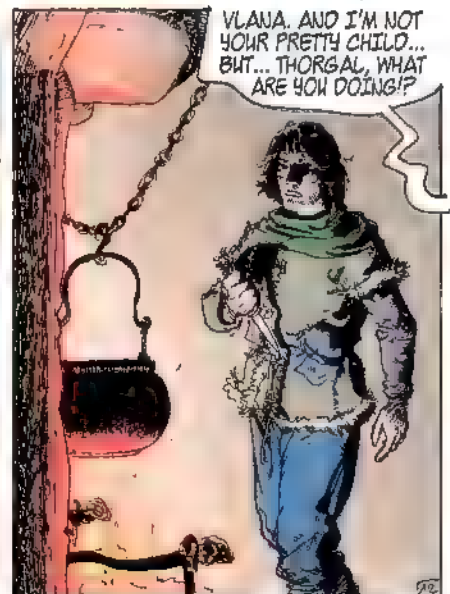


ALL RIGHT, COME IN. BUT I'M WARNING YOU THAT I'LL BE KEEPING MY WEAPON TO HAND.



I DON'T HAVE MUCH: GOAT'S MILK, CHEESE AND RYE CAKES.

ABOVE ALL, YOU HAVE THE MOST BEAUTIFUL EYES IN ALL OF MIDGARD.\* WHAT'S YOUR NAME, PRETTY CHILD?



VLANA. AND I'M NOT YOUR PRETTY CHILD... BUT... THORGAL, WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

\*THE EARTH, OPPOSITE TO ASGARD, THE DOMAIN OF THE GODS.



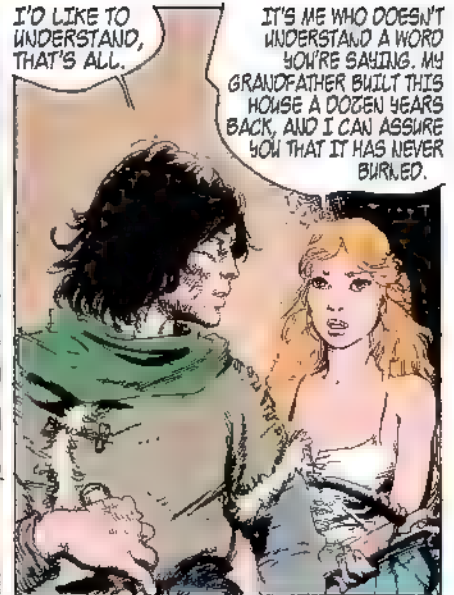


FORGIVE ME FOR DAMAGING YOUR WALL LIKE THIS, BUT I WANT TO CHECK SOMETHING...

CHECK WHAT?

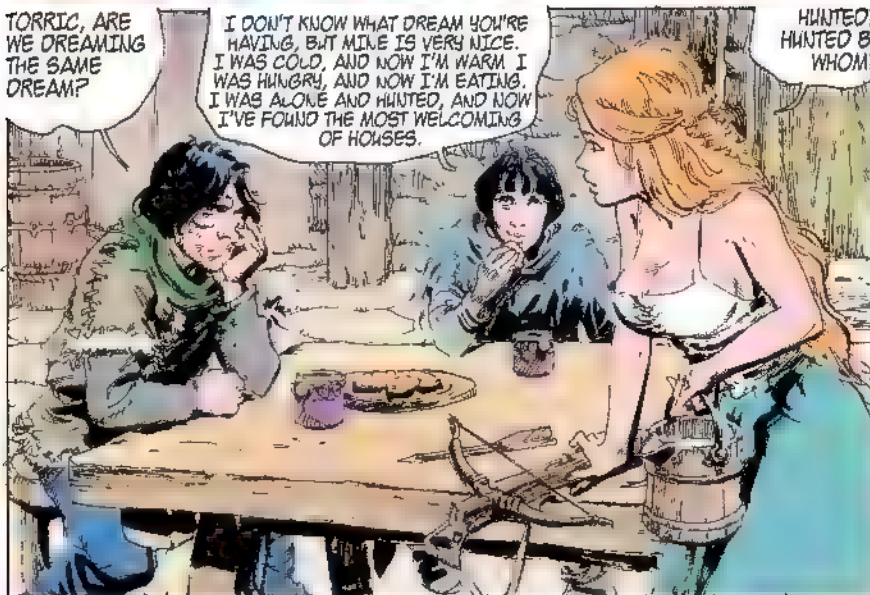


WHEN I LEFT THIS HOUSE JUST A FEW MOMENTS AGO, IT WAS IN RUINS AND BORE THE TRACES OF A FIRE FROM THE DISTANT PAST. NOW, THIS WALL IS INTACT...



I'D LIKE TO UNDERSTAND, THAT'S ALL.

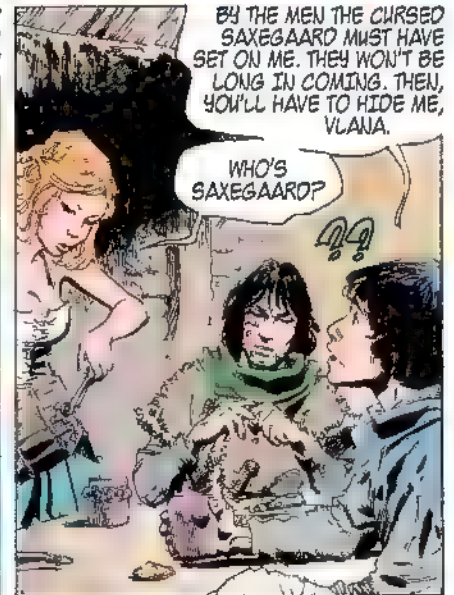
IT'S ME WHO DOESN'T UNDERSTAND A WORD YOU'RE SAYING. MY GRANDFATHER BUILT THIS HOUSE A DOZEN YEARS BACK, AND I CAN ASSURE YOU THAT IT HAS NEVER BURNED.



TORRIC, ARE WE DREAMING THE SAME DREAM?

I DON'T KNOW WHAT DREAM YOU'RE HAVING, BUT MINE IS VERY NICE. I WAS COLD, AND NOW I'M WARM. I WAS HUNGRY, AND NOW I'M EATING. I WAS ALONE AND HUNTED, AND NOW I'VE FOUND THE MOST WELCOMING OF HOUSES.

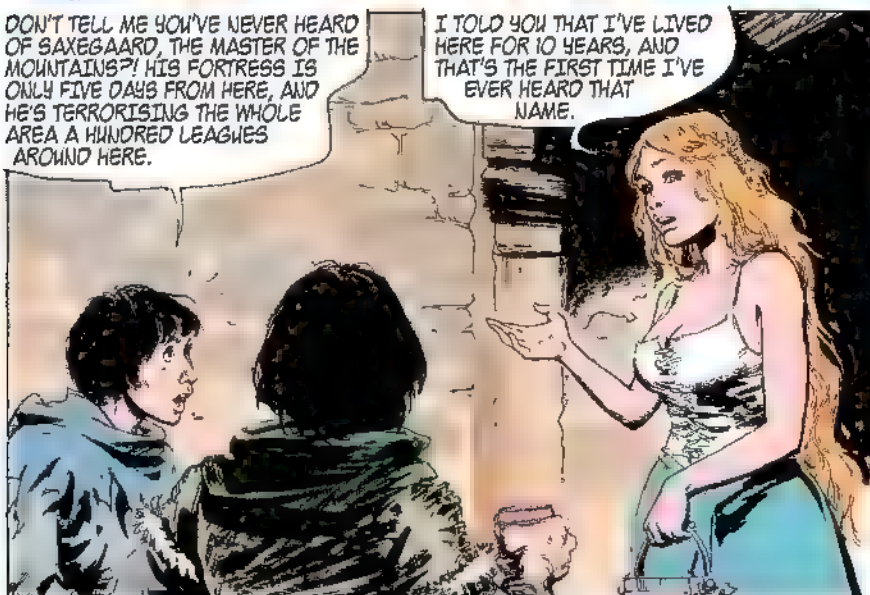
HUNTED? HUNTED BY WHOM?



BY THE MEN THE CURSED SAXEGAARD MUST HAVE SET ON ME. THEY WON'T BE LONG IN COMING. THEN, YOU'LL HAVE TO HIDE ME, VLAVA.

WHO'S SAXEGAARD?

??



DON'T TELL ME YOU'VE NEVER HEARD OF SAXEGAARD, THE MASTER OF THE MOUNTAINS? HIS FORTRESS IS ONLY FIVE DAYS FROM HERE, AND HE'S TERRORISING THE WHOLE AREA A HUNDRED LEAGUES AROUND HERE.

I TOLD YOU THAT I'VE LIVED HERE FOR 10 YEARS, AND THAT'S THE FIRST TIME I'VE EVER HEARD THAT NAME.



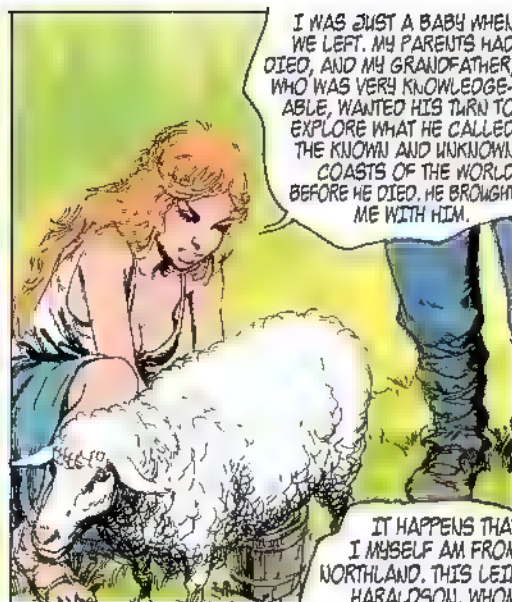
WHAT'S WRONG, TORRIC? YOU'VE STOPPED EATING? I THOUGHT YOU WERE HUNGRY.





I'VE SEEN A WEAPON LIKE THIS USED BEFORE. WHERE'D YOU GET IT?

FROM MY GRANDFATHER. HE BROUGHT IT WITH HIM WHEN WE LEFT OUR COUNTRY, KRETE\*, A LARGE ISLAND FAR FROM HERE IN THE WARM SEAS.



I WAS JUST A BABY WHEN WE LEFT. MY PARENTS HAD DIED, AND MY GRANDFATHER, WHO WAS VERY KNOWLEDGEABLE, WANTED HIS TURN TO EXPLORE WHAT HE CALLED THE KNOWN AND UNKNOWN COASTS OF THE WORLD BEFORE HE DIED. HE BROUGHT ME WITH HIM.

ONE DAY, OFF THE SHORE OF BRITANNIA, OUR BOAT WAS ATTACKED BY VIKINGS FROM NORTHLAND. WE WERE CAPTURED, AND MY GRANDFATHER BECAME THE SLAVE OF THE NORTHERN VIKING'S CHIEF. HARALD IVARSSON.

BUT THE VIKINGS HELD HIM IN HIGH ESTEEM. TEN YEARS AGO, MY FATHER CURED HARALD'S SON, LEIF, OF A DEADLY FEVER. OUT OF GRATITUDE, HARALD GAVE HIM BACK HIS FREEDOM, AND WE MOVED HERE.

WHAT TALES ARE YOU TELLING ME, VIANAP?



IT HAPPENS THAT I MYSELF AM FROM NORTHLAND. THIS LEIF HARALDSON, WHOM YOU CLAIM WAS CURED 10 YEARS AGO, WAS MY ADOPTIVE FATHER... AND HE'S BEEN DEAD FOR NEARLY 20 YEARS!!



WHY WOULD I LIE, THORGAL? YOU SEEM TO BE THE ONE WITH THE CONFUSED STORY.

I... I DON'T KNOW ANYMORE. WHERE IS THIS GOOD OLD GRANDFATHER, SO I CAN ASK HIM SOME QUESTIONS?



I DUG HIS GRAVE LAST MONTH, EAST OF THE HOUSE, WHERE THE MORNING SUN LAYS DOWN ITS FIRST RAYS. IT WAS A PLACE HE LOVED A LOT.

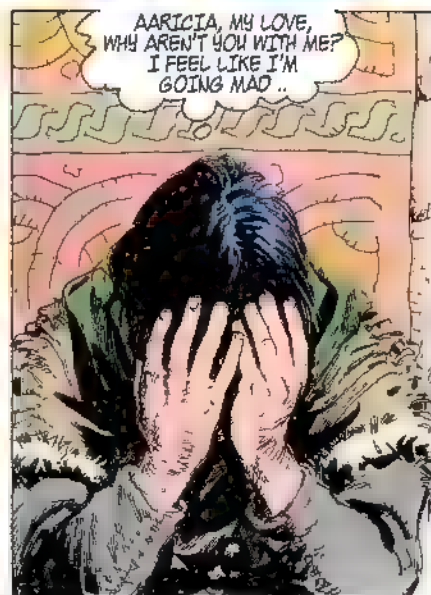
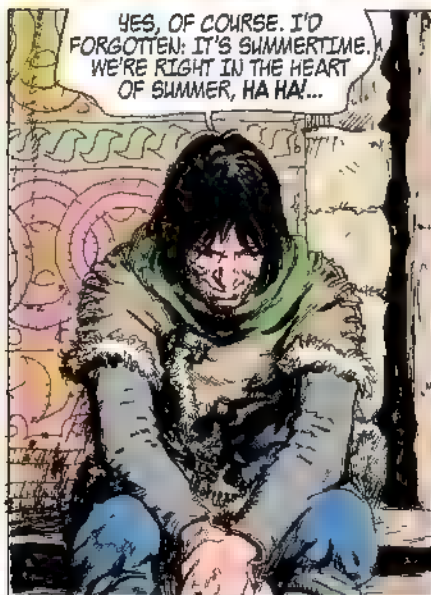
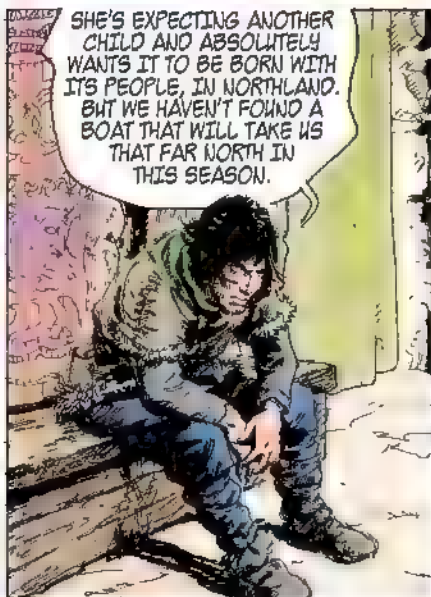
YOU MEAN... YOU'RE LIVING ALONE HERE?



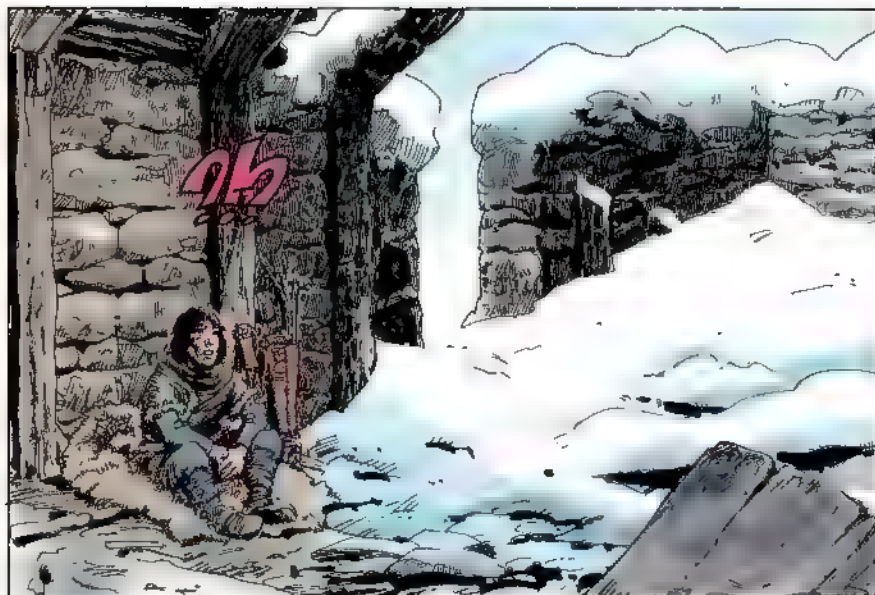
MY GRANDFATHER WARNED ME THAT I WOULDN'T STAY ALONE FOR LONG. A MAN WOULD COME... A STRONG, HANDSOME MAN, WITH DARK HAIR, WHO COULD LOVE ME AND PROTECT ME...

\*KRETE













STILL, I'M GLAD HE LEFT ME HIS SKIS... I MAY HAVE GOTTEN THE BETTER END OF THE BARGAIN IN THE END.

WHAT I DON'T UNDERSTAND, THOUGH, IS THAT HE LEFT NO TRACKS... NOW, IT DIDN'T SNOW LAST NIGHT. IF I GET HOLD OF HIM, HE'LL HAVE TO EXPLAIN TO ME HOW HE DID IT.



YESTERDAY'S AVALANCHE. I'D NEARLY FORGOTTEN IT. BUT THIS TIME, NO NEED TO GO AROUND IT. I JUST HAVE TO...



HEY, YOU, OVER THERE! STOP!



WHAT'S WITH THESE?...



SAXEGAARD'S MEN, OF COURSE! AND THEY THINK I'M TORRIC!









DROP THE KNIFE AND TURN AROUND SLOWLY...



LISTEN, THIS IS A CASE OF MIS-TAKEN IDENTITY. I'M NOT...

I KNOW. SAXEGAARD WANTS TO SEE YOU. HE'S WAITING IN THE PLACE YOU JUST LEFT.



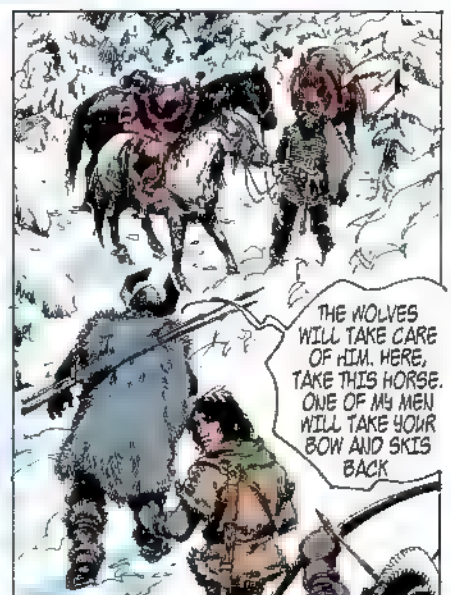
SAXEGAARD? HOW? ... AND FIRST, WHY WOULD I WANT TO SEE HIM?

BECAUSE HE HAS ORDERED IT. AND WHEN THE MASTER ORDERS, WE OBEY.

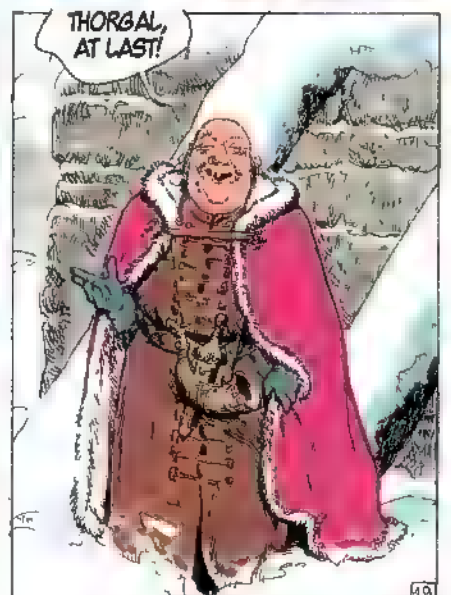


AT LEAST THAT'S AN EASY RULE TO REMEMBER. SAY, THERE'S A BODY THERE. PERHAPS WE SHOULD TAKE IT OUT.

BAH, IT'S PROBABLY THE SLAVE WHO ESCAPED FROM US SIX DAYS AGO.

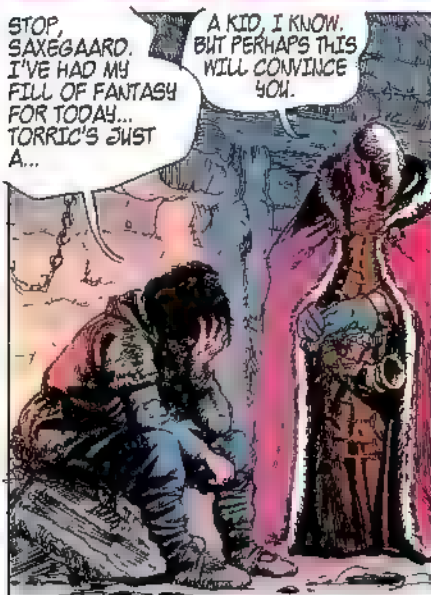


THE WOLVES WILL TAKE CARE OF HIM. HERE, TAKE THIS HORSE. ONE OF MY MEN WILL TAKE YOUR BOW AND SKIS BACK.



THORGAL, AT LAST!







THAT'S ENOUGH NOW, SAXEGAARD! NONE OF IT STANDS TO REASON, AND...

I UNDERSTAND YOU, THORGAL. I HAD DIFFICULTY ACCEPTING WHAT HAPPENED TO US, TOO. BUT I'VE HAD MORE TIME TO DO SO THAN YOU. A LOT MORE TIME...



WHEN THAT BEAM FELL ON US, IN THE SHEEPFOLD, WE WERE TRANSPORTED A LITTLE OVER 37 YEARS BACK IN TIME. HOW? I DON'T KNOW WHY 37 YEARS AND NOT 10, 50 OR 100? I HAVE NO IDEA ABOUT THAT, EITHER I ONLY FOUND OUT, THEN OBSERVED THE REALITY OF THE FACTS. THAT'S ALL



FOR YOU, THE "JOURNEY" ONLY LASTED BARELY AN HOUR. REMEMBER... WE WERE WATCHING YOU, VLANA AND I. YOU SAT JUST HERE, YOUR FACE IN YOUR HANDS AND SUDDENLY YOU DISAPPEARED. YOU CAME BACK, NOW, BUT I STAYED... THERE.



EVEN IF I COULD HAVE LEFT AS YOU DID, I WOULDN'T HAVE WANTED TO. I LOVED VLANA FROM THE FIRST DAY SO I STAYED WITH HER, AND I FINALLY FOUND OUT, AFTER ALL MY YEARS OF MISERY, WHAT HAPPINESS WAS LIKE. A HAPPINESS THAT, ALAS, ONLY LASTED FOR SIX MONTHS...

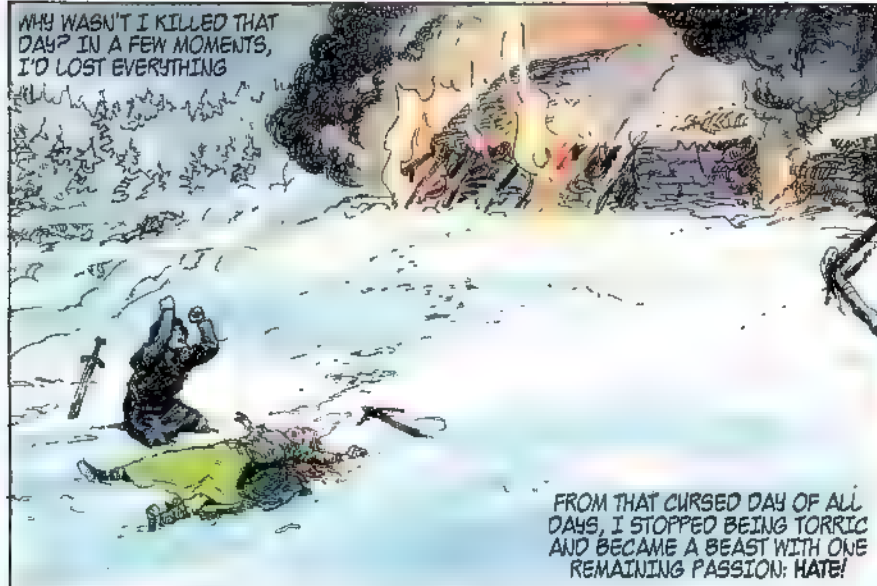


I'LL NEVER FORGET THE DAY THEY CAME; THE THIRD DAY AFTER THE WINTER SOLSTICE...



A BAND OF STARVING MARAUDERS WANTED OUR SHEEP. WE HAD NO CHANCE.

WHY WASN'T I KILLED THAT DAY? IN A FEW MOMENTS, I'D LOST EVERYTHING



I SET OUT AFTER THE PILLAGERS AND I KILLED THEM, ONE AFTER THE OTHER. TERRIFIED, THE SURVIVORS BEGGED ME TO FORGET MY VENGEANCE AND BECOME THEIR LEADER. I ACCEPTED, CHOOSING A NAME THAT IN MY EYES STOOD FOR POWER AND TERROR: SAXEGAARD, THE MASTER OF THE MOUNTAINS!



FROM THAT CURSED DAY OF ALL DAYS, I STOPPED BEING TORRIC AND BECAME A BEAST WITH ONE REMAINING PASSION: HATE!



BUT... WHAT ABOUT THE REAL SAXEGAARD, THEN? THE OTHER ONE? THE ONE TORRIC WAS RUNNING FROM?

I'M THE ONLY REAL SAXEGAARD, THORGAL. THE OTHER ONE, AS YOU SAY, NEVER... EXISTED. NOT ANYMORE, IN ANY CASE.

YOU SEE, MY FRIEND, OUR INCREDIBLE ADVENTURE SHOWED ME SOMETHING JUST AS INCREDIBLE. THE EVENTS THAT WE LIVE THROUGH FLOW FROM OTHER EVENTS THAT HAPPEN IN THE PAST. IF WE CHANGE SOMETHING IN THOSE PAST EVENTS, THEIR CONSEQUENCES IN THE PRESENT WILL ALSO BE CHANGED.

AN EXAMPLE: THE SHEEPFOLD BEAM THAT BROKE ON US DURING THE AUTUMN FOLLOWING MY ARRIVAL... I REINFORCED THAT BEAM SO IT COULDN'T FALL DOWN. AND IT HASN'T FALLEN DOWN SINCE! BUT IT GETS BETTER...

DO YOU REMEMBER THE NOTCH YOU CARVED IN THE WALL?

IT WAS A DREAM, SAXEGAARD. A DREAM!

REALLY? RUB THAT BEAM, THORGAL...

YESTERDAY THIS NOTCH DIDN'T EXIST. TODAY IT EXISTS... AS IT HAS FOR 37 YEARS! AND YOU'RE THE ONE WHO MADE IT, THORGAL!

DO YOU BELIEVE ME NOW?

I... LET'S GO OUTSIDE FOR A MOMENT...

IF ALL OF THAT'S TRUE... WHY DID YOU COME HERE TO TELL ME? FOR THE SIMPLE PLEASURE OF SEEING ME AGAIN AFTER 37 YEARS?

NO. I WAITED ALL THIS TIME FOR THIS DAY BECAUSE I HAVE SOMETHING TO ASK OF YOU, THORGAL.

I WANT YOU TO GO AND GET VLANA!

WHAT?!?





THROUGHOUT ALL THESE YEARS OF PILLAGING, MASSACRE, RAPE AND TORTURE, THROUGHOUT ALL THIS TIME OF GROWING MY POWER AND FORTUNE, THERE HASN'T BEEN A DAY, NOT EVEN ONE HOUR, THAT I HAVEN'T THOUGHT OF HER.



I WAITED, THORGAL. I DESPERATELY WAITED FOR THIS DAY WHEN I MET YOU AND IT ALL BEGAN. AND THAT DAY HAS FINALLY ARRIVED.

BUT, THEN, WHAT DO YOU HOPE FOR? THAT WE MAKE THE BEAM DROP AGAIN TO FIND OURSELVES 37 YEARS IN THE PAST?

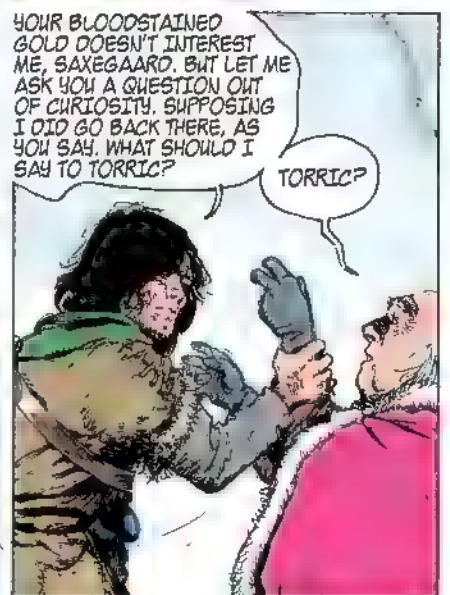


NOT US, THORGAL. YOU. I'VE HAD PLENTY OF TIME TO FIND OUT ABOUT YOU, AND I KNOW THAT YOU'RE A DIFFERENT MAN TO OTHERS. YOU'RE THE ONE WHO TOOK US BACK IN TIME. AND WHAT YOU DID ONCE, YOU CAN DO AGAIN.



GO BACK THERE, I BEG YOU! GO BACK TO BEFORE THOSE CURSED PILLAGERS KILL HER, AND BRING VLANA BACK TO ME. I'LL GIVE YOU ALL THE GOLD...

ENOUGH!



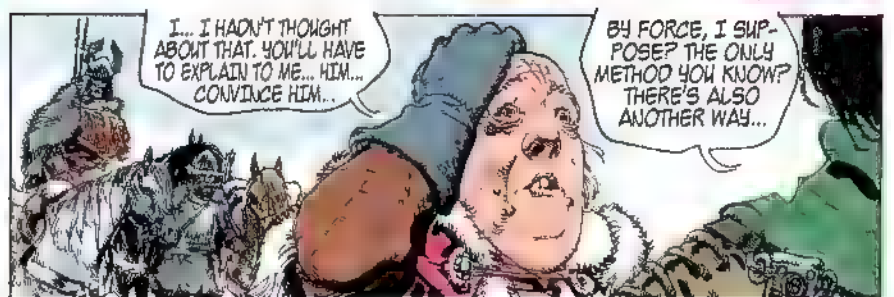
YOUR BLOODSTAINED GOLD DOESN'T INTEREST ME, SAXEGAARD. BUT LET ME ASK YOU A QUESTION OUT OF CURIOSITY. SUPPOSING I DID GO BACK THERE, AS YOU SAY. WHAT SHOULD I SAY TO TORRIC?

TORRIC?



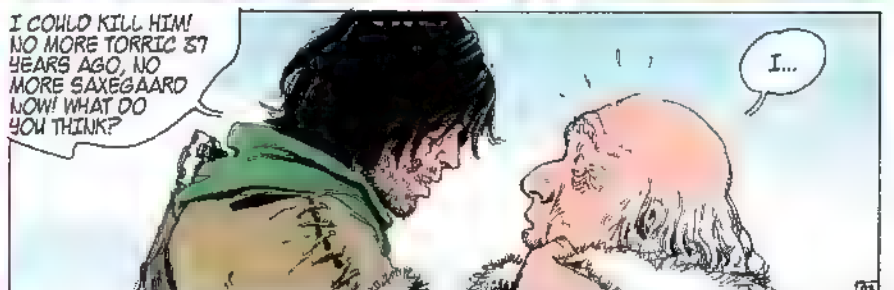
YES, TORRIC. MEANING YOURSELF, IF I'VE UNDERSTOOD CORRECTLY. DO YOU THINK HE'LL LET ME TAKE HIS WIFE WITHOUT SAYING ANYTHING?

??



I... I HADN'T THOUGHT ABOUT THAT. YOU'LL HAVE TO EXPLAIN TO ME... HIM... CONVINCE HIM...

BY FORCE, I SUPPOSE? THE ONLY METHOD YOU KNOW? THERE'S ALSO ANOTHER WAY...



I COULD KILL HIM! NO MORE TORRIC 37 YEARS AGO, NO MORE SAXEGAARD NOW! WHAT DO YOU THINK?

I...

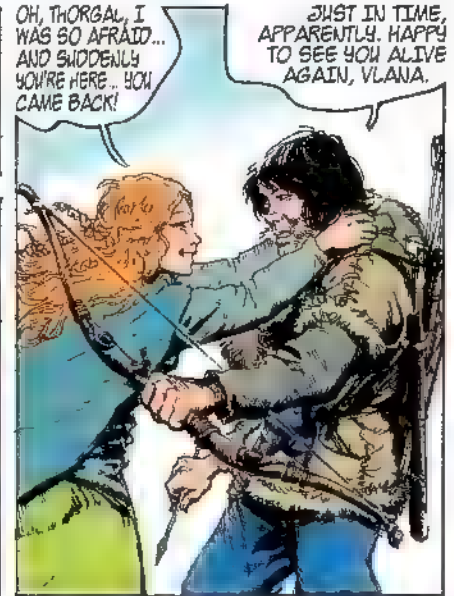




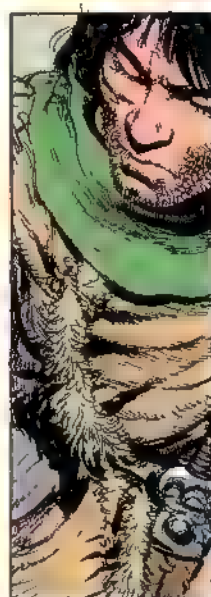
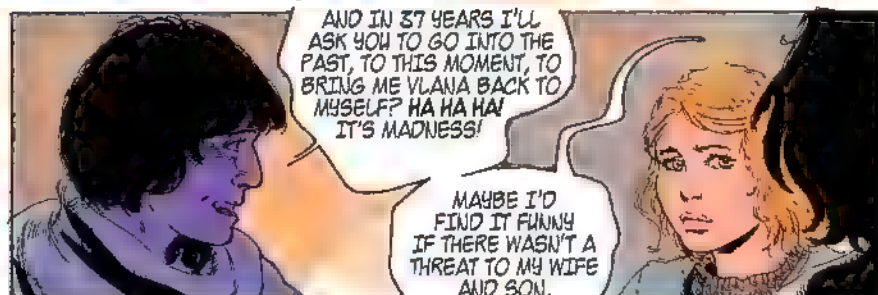
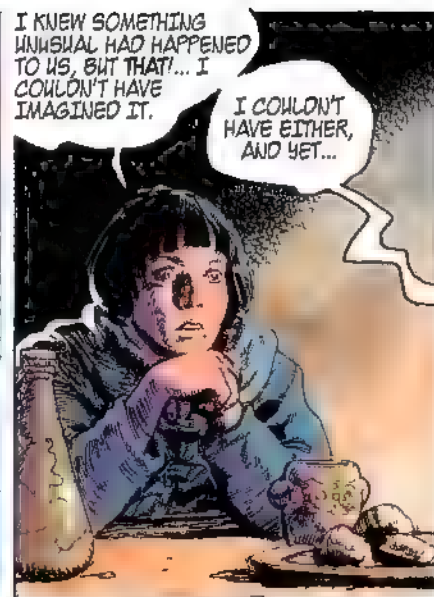












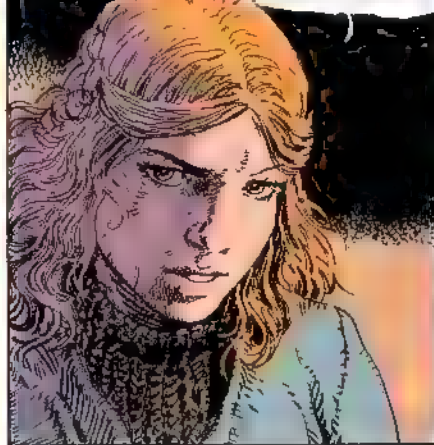


I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN THAT GOOD OLD GRANDFATHER WAS BEHIND ALL THIS. WHAT HAS HE MADE UP FOR YOU NOW?

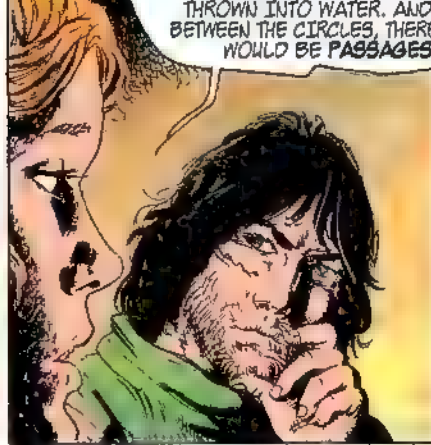
HE MADE NOTHING UP, TORRIC. HE STUDIED. I TOLD YOU THAT HE WAS VERY KNOWLEDGEABLE.



HIS MAIN PASSION WAS FOR THE LITTLE-KNOWN WORKS OF A CRETIAN PHILOSOPHER FROM ANCIENT TIMES, A CERTAIN PHAIOS. THOSE WORKS CONCERNED TIME, WHICH WAS NOT CONSIDERED A FIXED DURATION BUT A DISTANCE THAT CAN BE TRAVELLED IN SEVERAL DIRECTIONS.



ACCORDING TO THIS PHAIOS, TIME WOULDN'T BE LIKE A RIVER THAT ALWAYS RUNS IN THE SAME DIRECTION, BUT LIKE CIRCLES, ONE AROUND THE OTHER, CONSTANTLY MOVING LIKE THE RIPPLES FORMED BY A PEBBLE THROWN INTO WATER. AND, BETWEEN THE CIRCLES, THERE WOULD BE PASSAGES!



THESE PASSAGES, IDENTIFIED BY THE POSITION OF CERTAIN STARS IN THE SKY, WOULD BE VERY RARE. PHAIOS CLAIMED THAT AT LEAST ONE OF THEM EXISTED IN A GREAT LAND THAT HAD DISAPPEARED, CALLED ATLANTIS. THE REAL GOAL OF MY GRANDFATHER'S JOURNEY WAS TO DISCOVER ONE OF THESE PASSAGES.



AND HE FOUND ONE?

YES, IN THE VERY PLACE WE ARE SITTING. THAT'S WHY HE BUILT THIS HOUSE HERE AFTER BEING SET FREE BY THE VIKINGS.

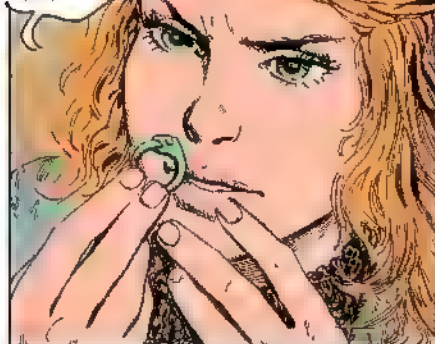


AND WHAT'S THE RING FOR?

I DON'T EXACTLY KNOW. MY GRANDFATHER CALLED IT THE VEHICLE. IT'S MADE OF AN UNKNOWN MATERIAL THAT HE CALLED ORICHALCUM AND IT REPRESENTS OUROBOROS, THE SNAKE THAT ETERNALLY SWALLOWS ITS TAIL. HE SAID THAT IT WAS THE SYMBOL OF THE GREAT PARADOX.



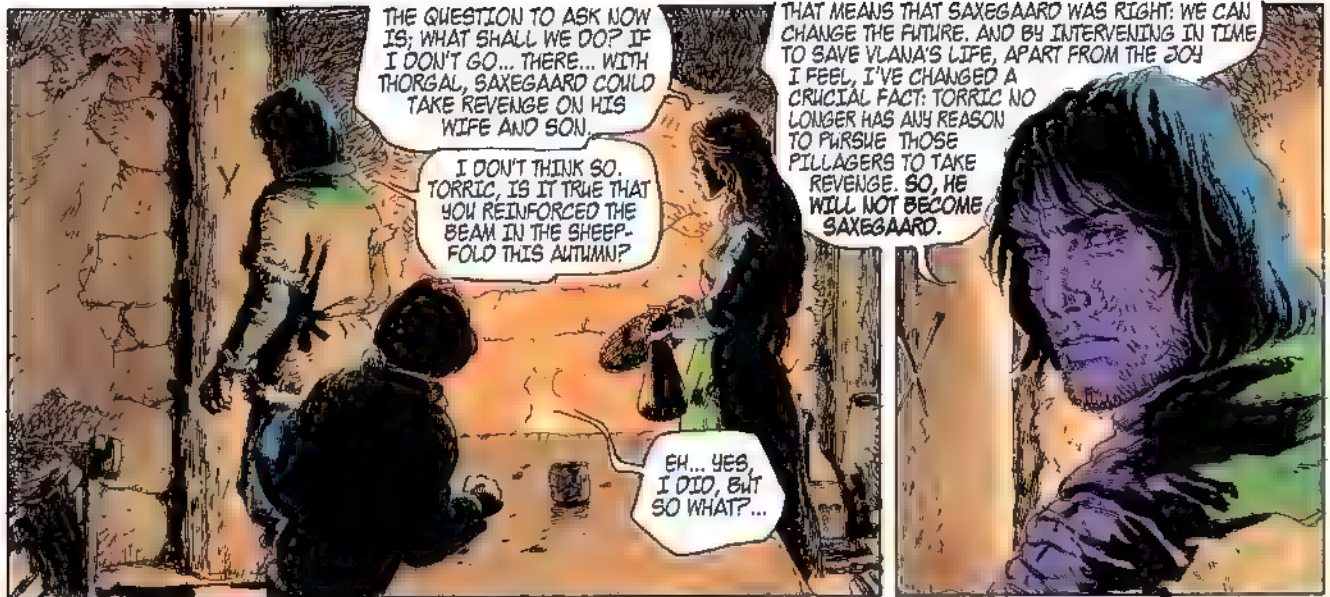
I'LL ADMIT I NEVER UNDERSTOOD MUCH OF ALL THAT. FOR ME, IT WAS JUST THE WHIM OF AN OLD MAN. THE DAY BEFORE HE DIED, MY GRANDFATHER TOLD ME THAT HE HAD SENT THE RING INTO A FUTURE TIME.



HE TOOK MY HAND AND, SMILING, ADDED THAT IT WOULD BE BROUGHT BACK TO ME BY A MAN WITH BLACK HAIR WHO... BUT I'VE ALREADY TOLD YOU THAT.











GET A GRIP ON YOURSELF, TORRIC! EVEN THINKING SUCH A THING IS DISHONOURABLE IS THAT HOW LITTLE YOU VALUE THE HAPPINESS VLANA'S GIVEN YOU?



YOU'RE RIGHT, THAT IDEA IS COMPLETELY DISHONOURABLE...



... BUT I LIKE IT AND YOU'LL DO IT IMMEDIATELY! GET BACK TO THE WALL AND DON'T MOVE!

!!!



PERFECT. GO AND JOIN HIM, VLANA. DO YOU STILL HAVE YOUR RING? YOU'RE GOING ON A JOURNEY, BOTH OF YOU. A LONG JOURNEY.

TORRIC...



YOU'RE MAD, TORRIC. AN ENTIRE LIFETIME WOULDN'T BE LONG ENOUGH TO OVERCOME THE REGRET YOU'LL FEEL FOR THIS IDIOCY.



I'LL REDEEM MYSELF LATER... IN 37 YEARS ABOUT THAT, THORGAL. MAKE SURE YOU RETURN TO THE SAME TIME YOU LEFT. OR ELSE I SWEAR THAT SAXEGAARD WILL TAKE CARE OF YOUR FAMILY IN THE CRUELLEST WAY!



YOU FILTHY LITTLE!...

NO, THORGAL! OBEY HIM! I DON'T WANT YOUR WIFE AND SON TO RUN THE SLIGHTEST RISK BECAUSE OF ME



BESIDES, I HAVE A BETTER IDEA...







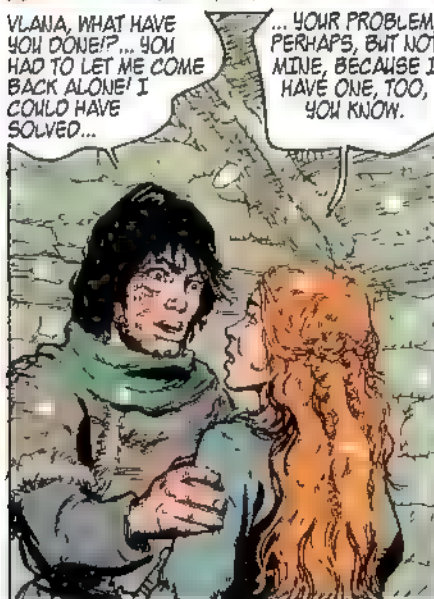
WAS THAT YOUR IDEA?

NO. THAT WAS A DESIRE... A DESIRE I'VE HAD FOR A LONG TIME. MY IDEA IS SOMETHING ELSE.



YOU THINK THAT WE'RE REALLY 57 YEARS LATER? IT'S FANTASTIC!

??



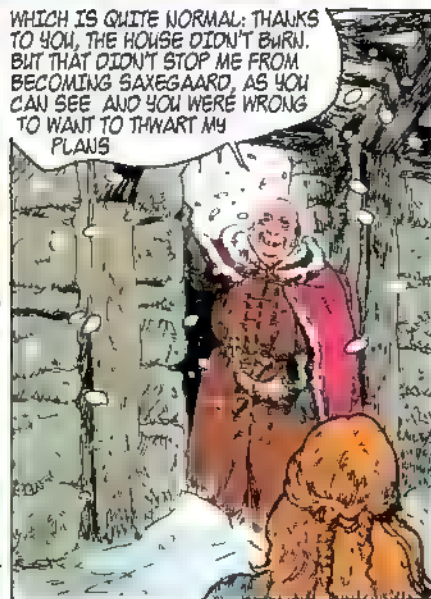
VLANA, WHAT HAVE YOU DONE? ... YOU HAD TO LET ME COME BACK ALONE! I COULD HAVE SOLVED...

... YOUR PROBLEM, PERHAPS, BUT NOT MINE, BECAUSE I HAVE ONE, TOO, YOU KNOW.

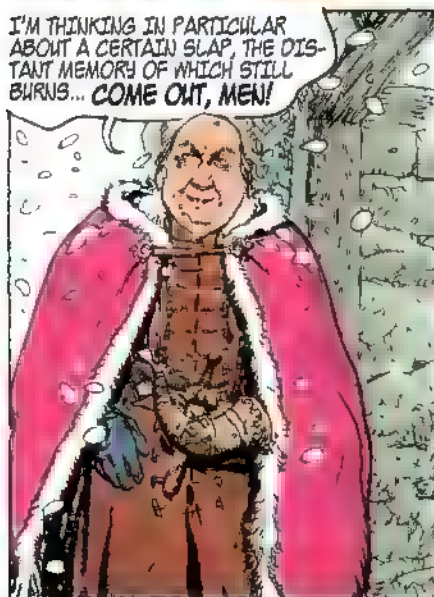


I KNOW, BUT... WAIT! SOMETHING'S NOT RIGHT... THIS HOUSE IS DIFFERENT...

THAT'S BECAUSE THE WOOD DOESN'T SHOW SIGNS OF BEING BURNT, THORGAL.



WHICH IS QUITE NORMAL. THANKS TO YOU, THE HOUSE DIDN'T BURN. BUT THAT DIDN'T STOP ME FROM BECOMING SAXEGAARD, AS YOU CAN SEE AND YOU WERE WRONG TO WANT TO THWART MY PLANS



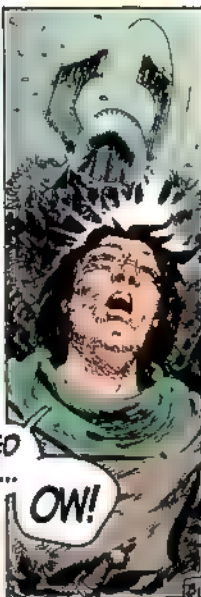
I'M THINKING IN PARTICULAR ABOUT A CERTAIN SLAP, THE DISTANT MEMORY OF WHICH STILL BURNS... COME OUT, MEN!



YOU'LL NOTICE THAT EVERYTHING'S BEEN PREPARED FOR YOUR RETURN. HA HA HA!

THORGAL!

CURSED TRAIT...



OW!



AS FOR YOU, MY BEAUTIFUL, I'VE FINALLY GOT YOU BACK! I NEVER THOUGHT THOSE 37 YEARS WOULD BE SO LONG TO LIVE THROUGH

YOU... YOU'RE TORRIC? I CAN'T BELIEVE IT...



SO I'VE CHANGED THEN?

IT'S WORSE THAN I COULD HAVE IMAGINED, BUT THAT SUITS ME FINE.

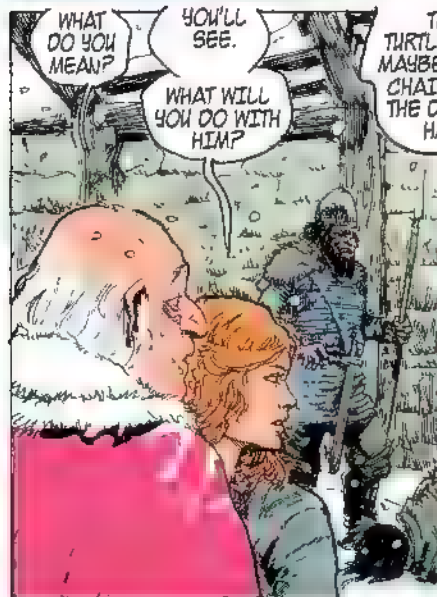


WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

YOU'LL SEE.

WHAT WILL YOU DO WITH HIM?

THAT DEPENDS ON YOU, MY THURLEDOME... IF YOU'RE KIND, I'LL MAYBE KEEP HIM AS A SLAVE. WE'LL CHAIN HIM LIKE A GUARD DOG TO THE DOOR OF OUR BEDROOM. HA HA!



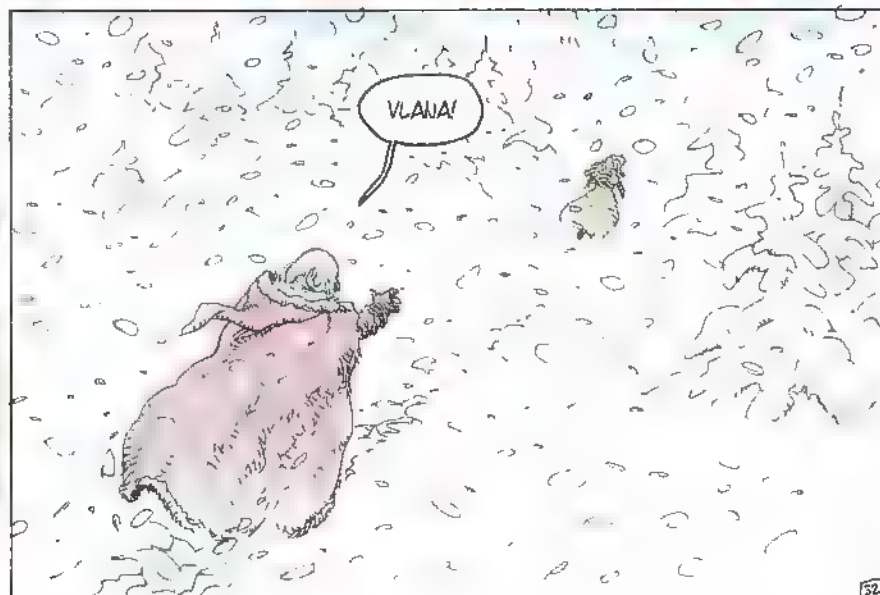
VLANA?!



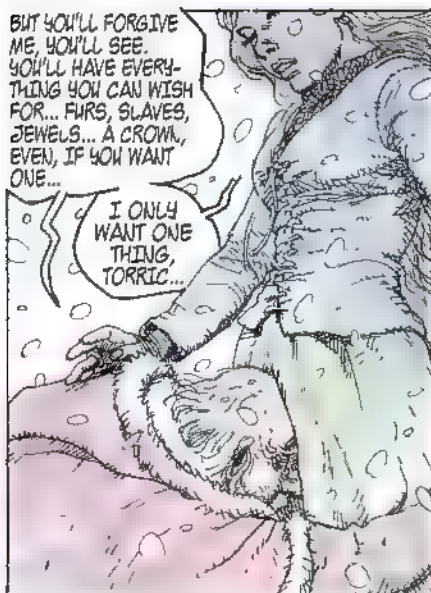
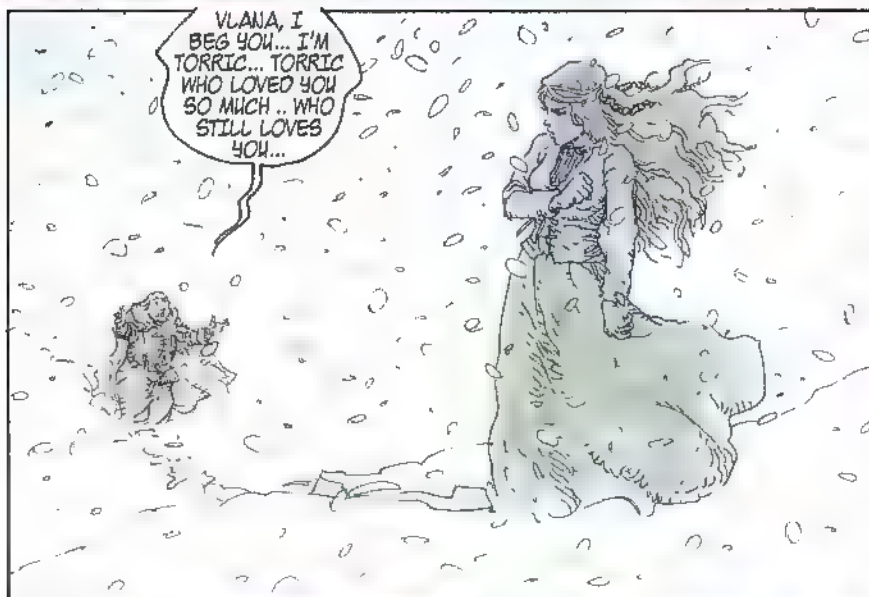
VLANA, COME BACK! I WAS JOKING...



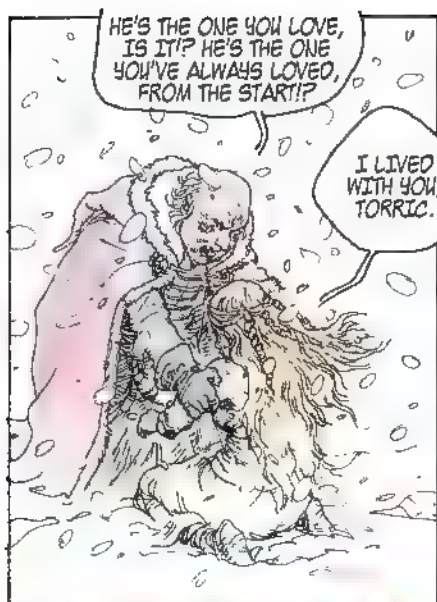
VLANA!









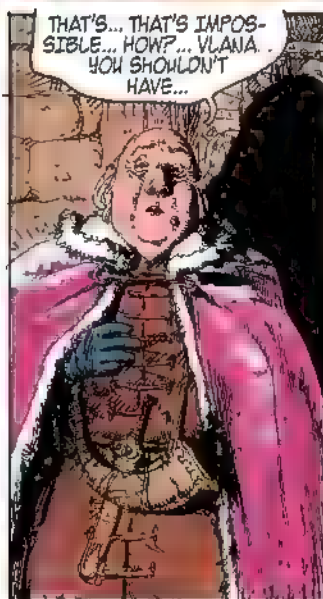


HE'S THE ONE YOU LOVE,  
IS IT? HE'S THE ONE  
YOU'VE ALWAYS LOVED,  
FROM THE START!?

I LIVED  
WITH YOU,  
TORRIC.



I'LL MAKE HIM SUFFER  
FOR THIS! HE'LL DIE  
SLOWLY IN FRONT OF YOU,  
AND HIS SCREAMS OF  
PAIN WILL HAUNT YOU  
TILL THE END OF YOUR  
DAYS. I'LL...



THAT'S... THAT'S IMPOS-  
SIBLE... HOW?... VLANA...  
YOU SHOULDN'T  
HAVE...



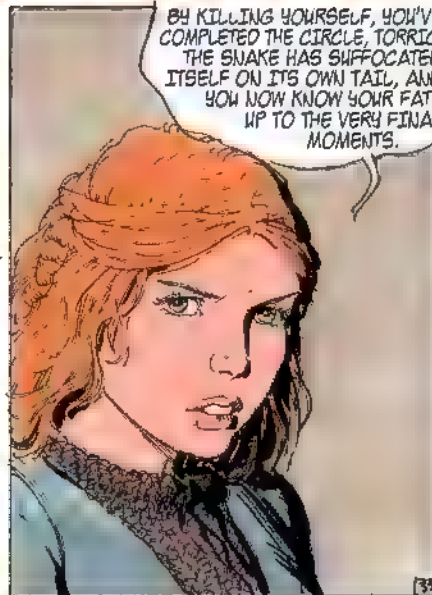
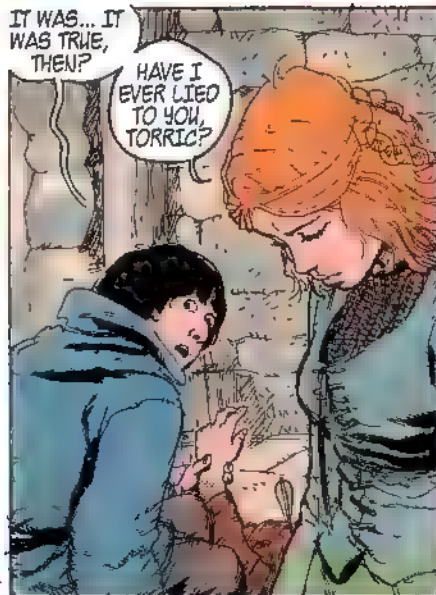
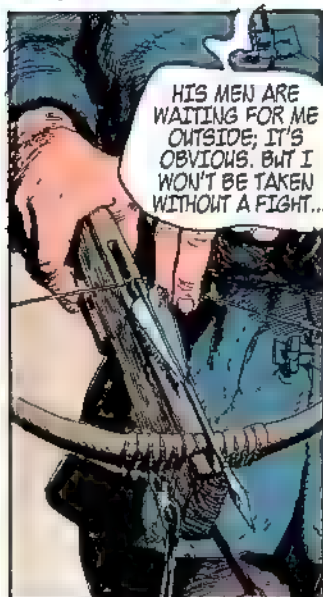
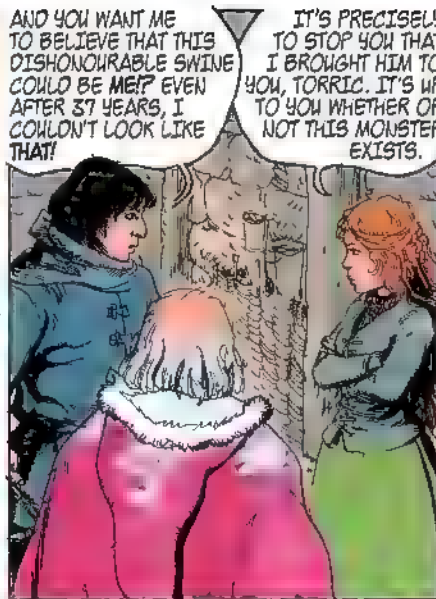
WHAT ARE YOU  
DOING HERE, VLANA?  
WHERE'S THORGALP?  
WHO'S THIS  
MAN?

IT'S  
SAXEGAARD,  
TORRIC.

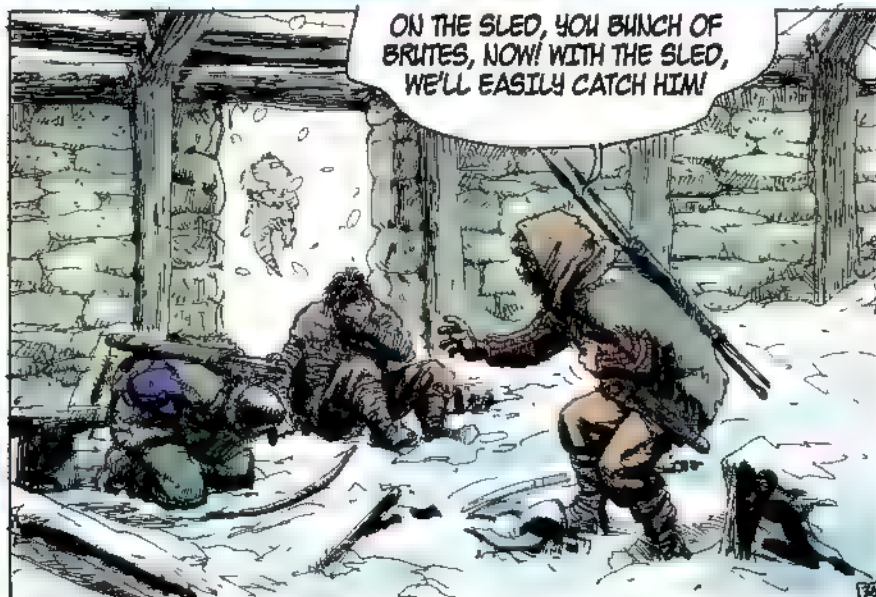


MEANING YOURSELF! I WENT TO  
GET HIM SO YOU COULD SEE WHAT  
YOU WANTED TO BECOME. SO, LOOK  
AT YOURSELF, DEAR. LOOK CLOSELY  
INTO THE MIRROR OF TIME.

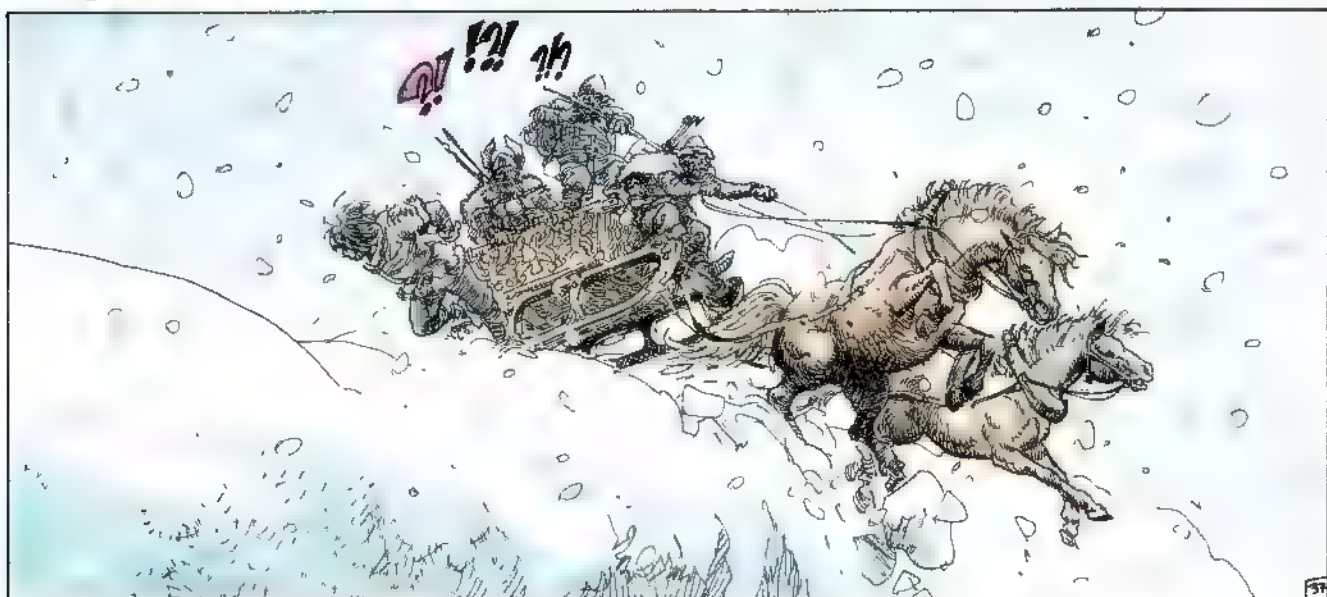
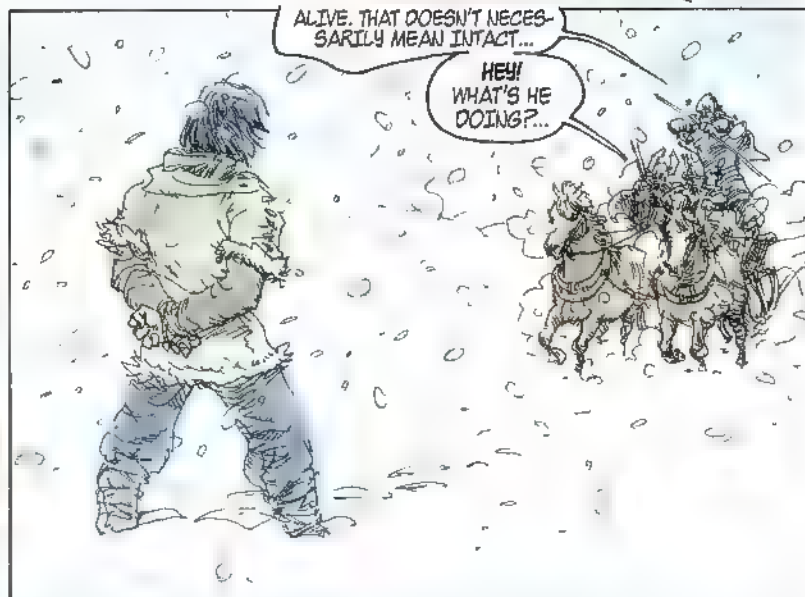
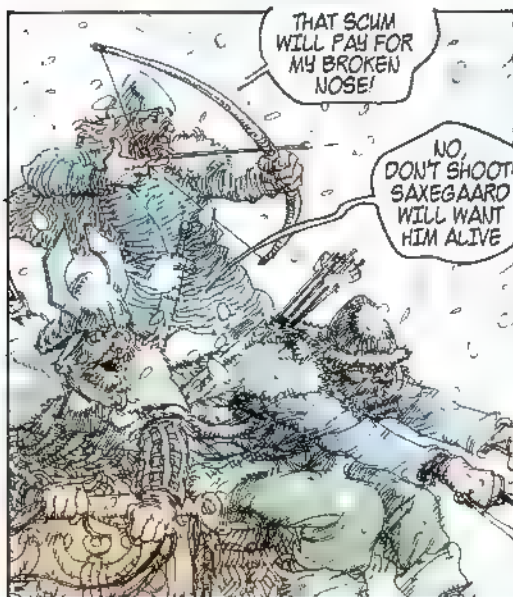
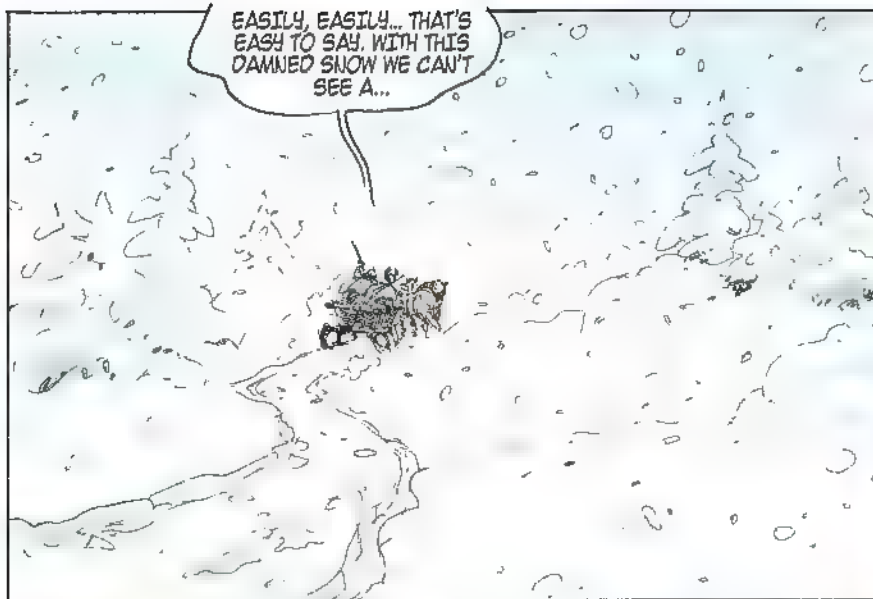




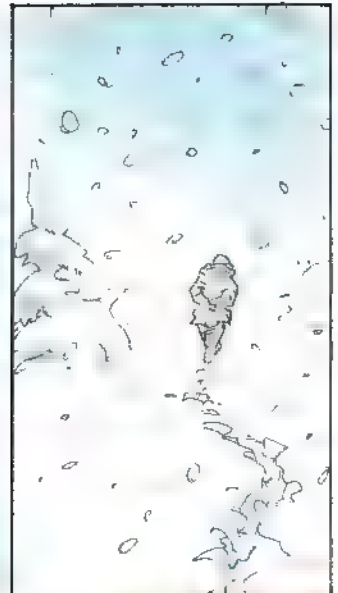












WHAT HAVE I  
DONE, VLANA?  
WHAT HAVE I DONE  
TO US? IF ONLY I  
HADN'T GIVEN IN  
TO THIS MAD-  
NESS...

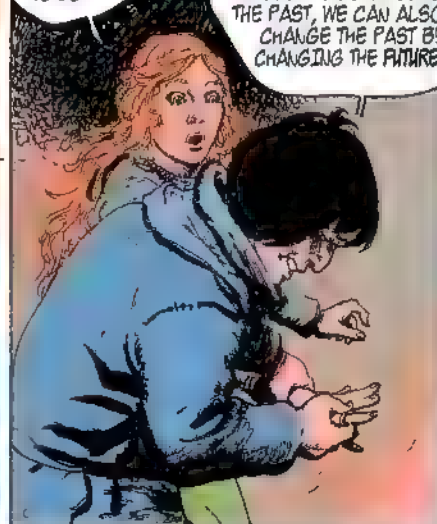
IT'S TOO LATE TO HAVE  
REGRETS, TORRIC. THIS  
TIME YOU CAN'T GO  
BACK.



TOO LATE?... GO BACK?...  
THAT'S THE SOLUTION, THERE!  
GIVE ME THE RING, NOW!



TORRIC, WHAT  
ARE YOU GOING  
TO DO?



DON'T YOU UNDERSTAND?  
IF WE CAN CHANGE THE  
PRESENT BY CHANGING  
THE PAST, WE CAN ALSO  
CHANGE THE PAST BY  
CHANGING THE FUTURE!

WITH THIS I CAN FIND THORGAL  
IN 37 YEARS' TIME, BUT A FEW  
HOURS BEFORE HE GETS TO THIS  
HOUSE FOR THE FIRST TIME. AND  
THEN I'LL KILL HIM!







KILL THORGAL? YOU'RE MAD! WHY? I DON'T UNDERSTAND...

BECAUSE HE'S THE CAUSE OF ALL THIS. HE'S THE ONE WHO FOUND THE RING. HE'S THE ONE WHO DRAGGED ME INTO THE PAST. HE'S THE ONE I'LL WAIT 87 YEARS FOR TO SEND AFTER YOU. HE'S THE ONE WHO TAUGHT ME THAT I'LL BECOME SAXEGAARD



IF THORGAL DIDN'T EXIST, EVERYTHING WOULD HAVE HAPPENED DIFFERENTLY, VLANA. AND SOON, SOON FOR ME, AT LEAST, HE WILL NEVER HAVE EXISTED!

BUT TORRIC, THINK ABOUT IT. IT'S ABSURD. THORGAL'S GOT NOTHING TO DO WITH IT. IT'S YOU WHO...



YOU SEE, HE'S STILL DIVIDING US. WHEN I'VE KILLED HIM, I'LL COME BACK IN TIME, SIX MONTHS BEFORE NOW, JUST LIKE THE FIRST TIME...

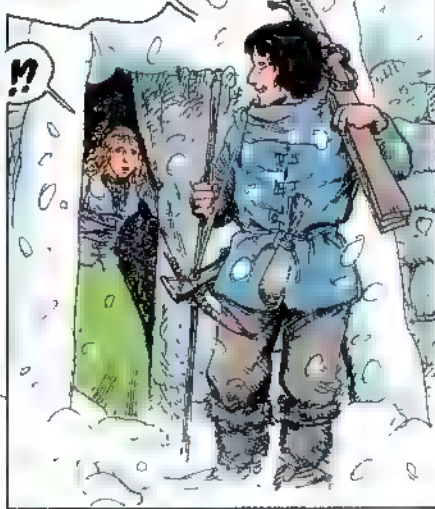


BUT THIS TIME I'LL BE ALONE. AND YOU'LL LOVE ME AND ME ALONE, AS YOU WON'T YET HAVE HAD THE MEMORY OF WHAT WE'VE JUST LIVED THROUGH AND WHAT WE'LL NEVER LIVE THROUGH AGAIN.

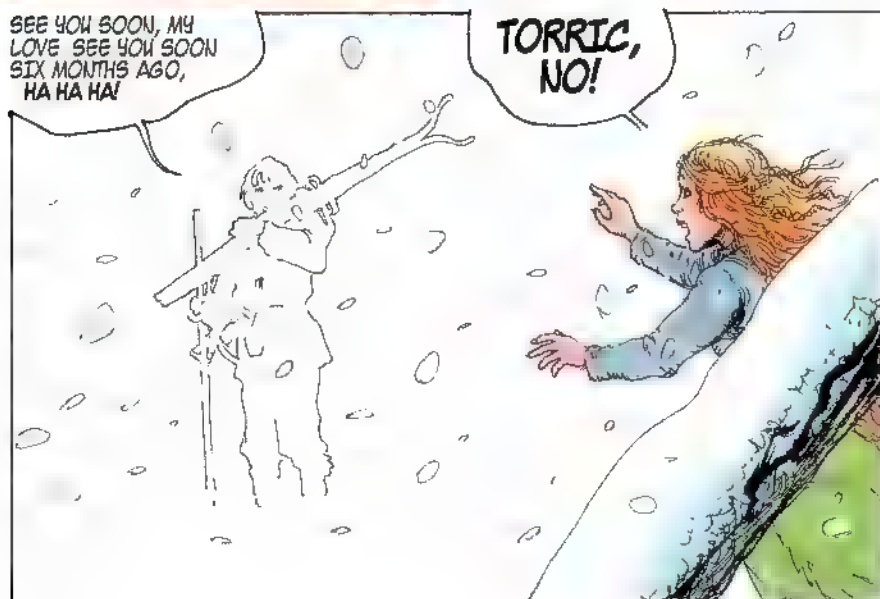
NO, I'LL STOP YOU!



HOW COULD YOU, POOR FOOL? I'M THE ONE WITH THE RING. YOU'LL STAY HERE IN YOUR OWN TIME!



!?



SEE YOU SOON, MY LOVE SEE YOU SOON SIX MONTHS AGO, HA HA HA!

TORRIC, NO!



NO.





FABULOUS! THIS RING IS A MIRACULOUS MARVEL. SHAME THAT ITS POWER IS LIMITED TO THIS SPOT.



THE SAME TRACES OF FIRE AS THE FIRST TIME SO I HAVE COME BACK BEFORE IT ALL STARTED.



A QUICK CHECK, STILL...



PERFECT, THERE'S NO NOTCH. AND THERE NEVER WILL BE.



PERHAPS, IF I WAITED AWHILE I COULD SEE MYSELF ARRIVE, HUNTED, FAMISHED, MY HAND COVERED IN BLOOD...

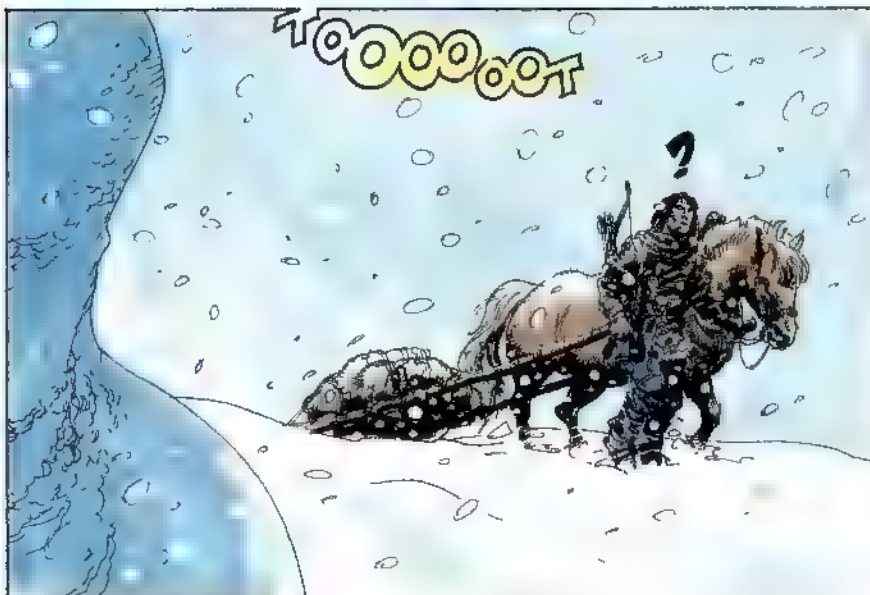
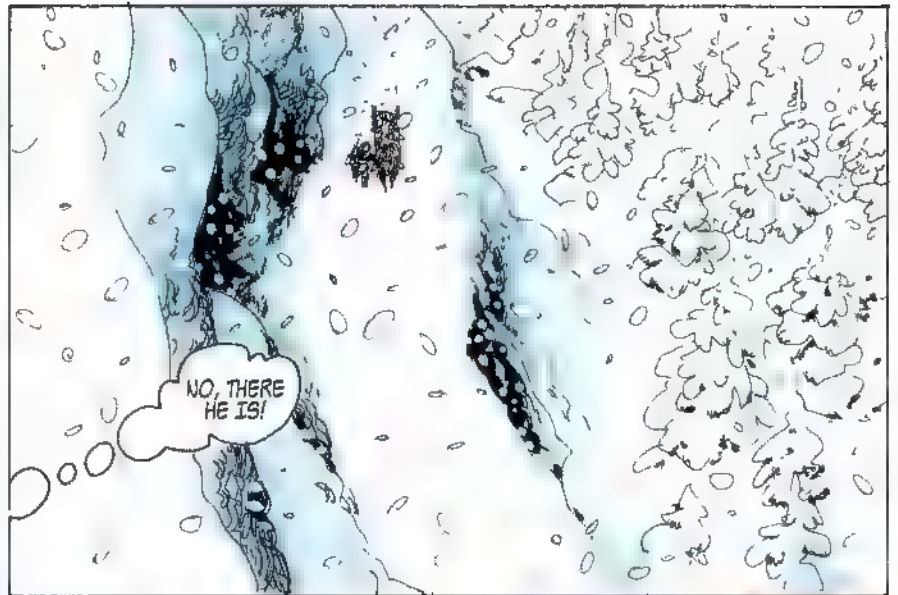
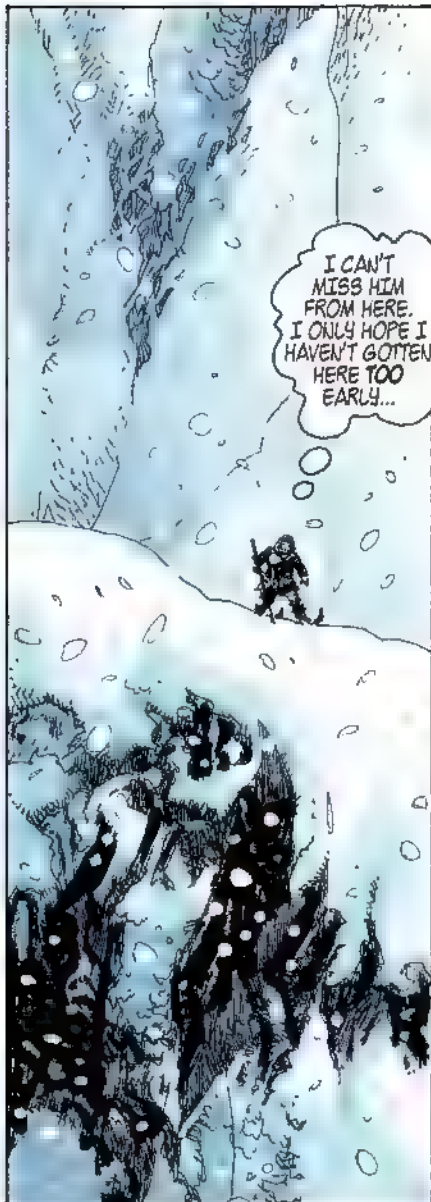


NO, THAT'S DAFT.

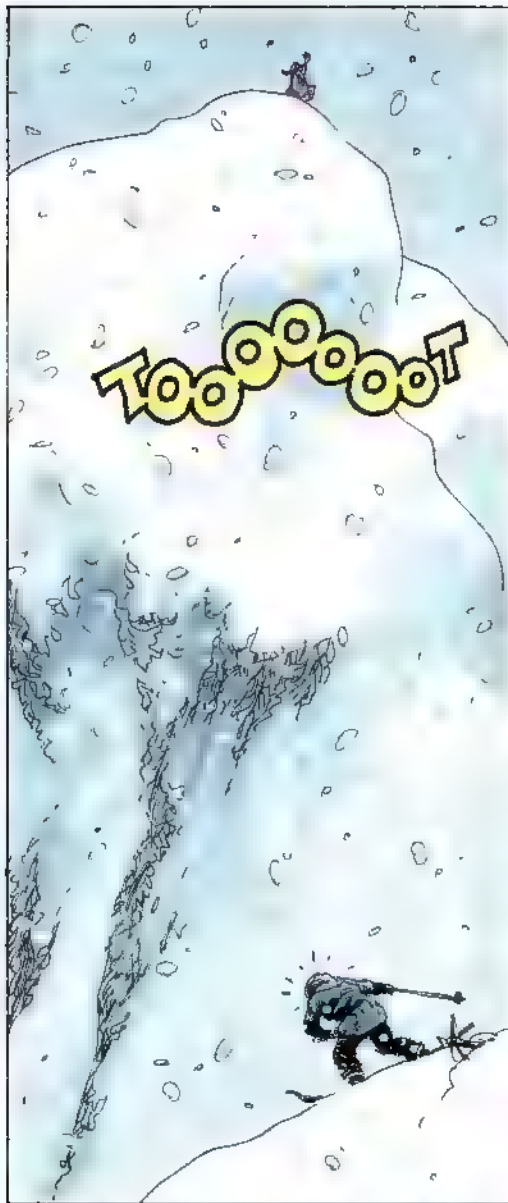


A PATH FROM THE SOUTH... THAT MUST BE WHERE THORGAL WILL COME FROM.

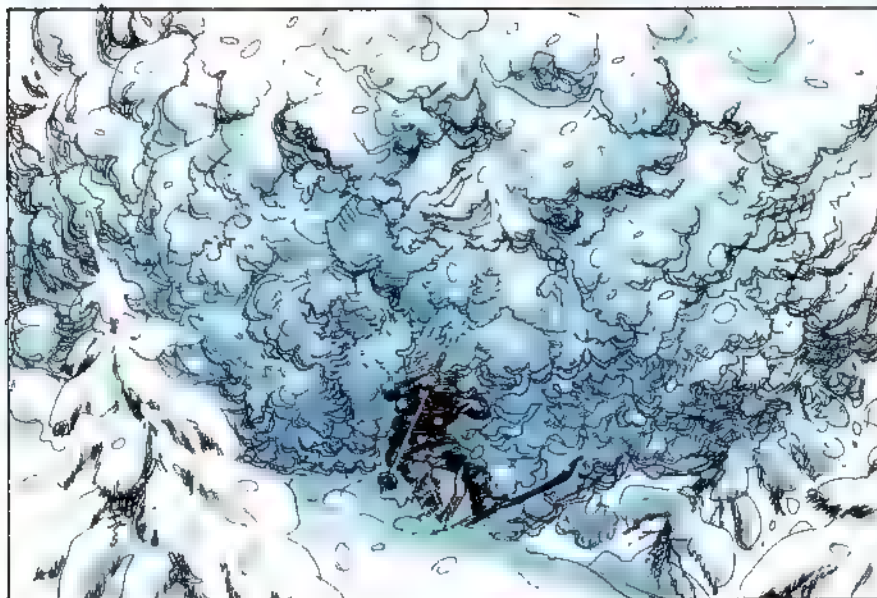
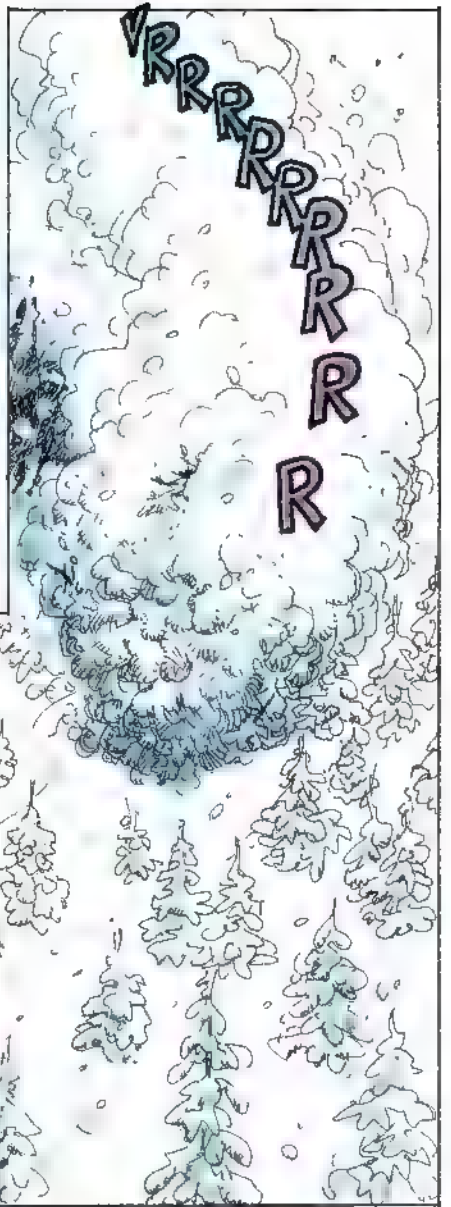
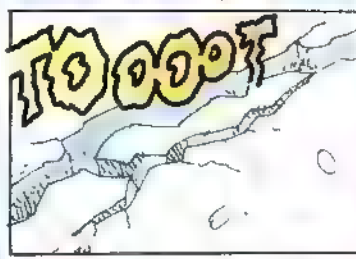




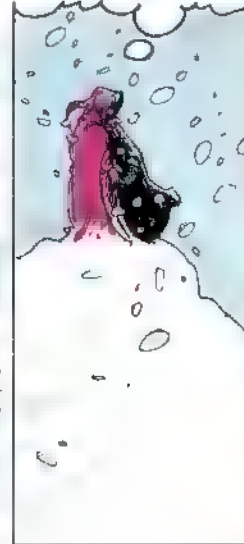




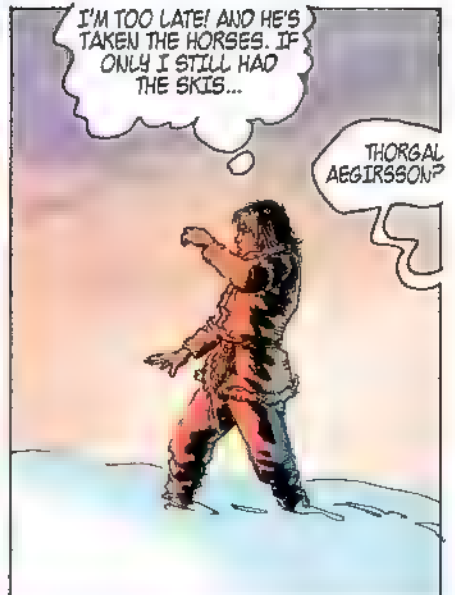
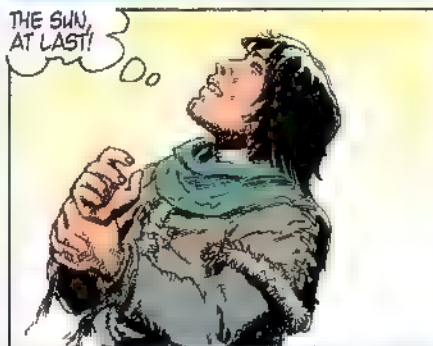
SAXEGAARD... HOW DID HE DO THAT? ...  
I DON'T UNDERSTAND...



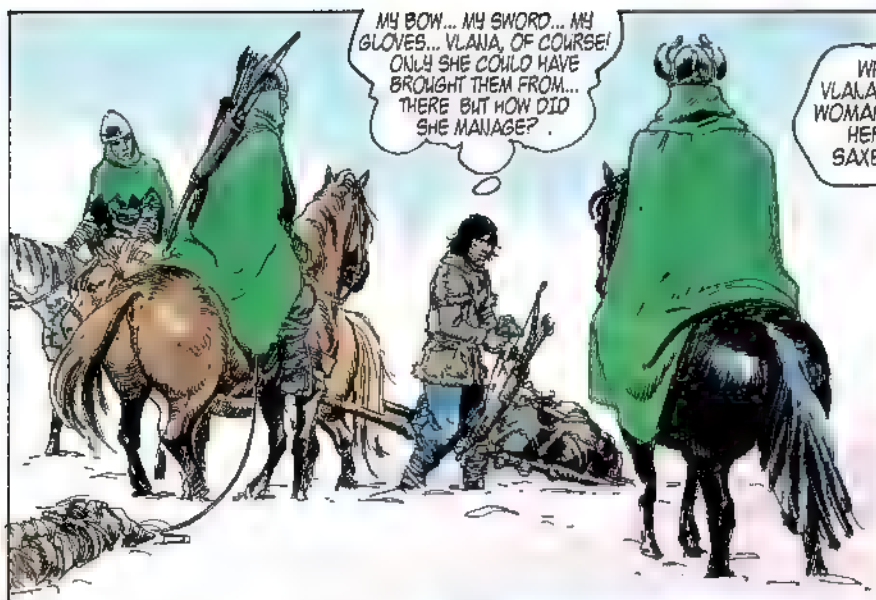
I, TOO, HAVE LEARNED  
TO WAIT, TORRIC...





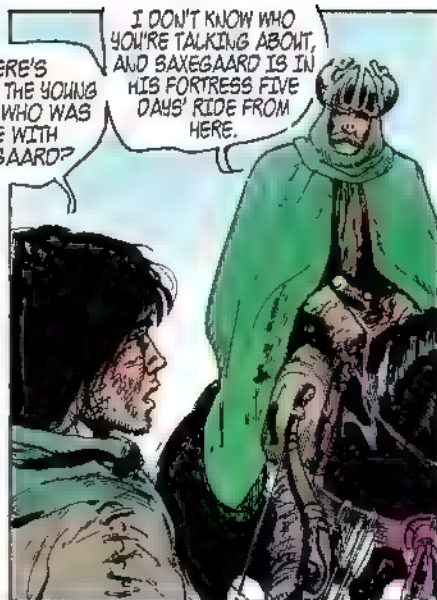






MY BOW... MY SWORD... MY GLOVES... VLANA, OF COURSE! ONLY SHE COULD HAVE BROUGHT THEM FROM... THERE BUT HOW DID SHE MANAGE?

WHERE'S VLANA? THE YOUNG WOMAN WHO WAS HERE WITH SAXEGAARD?



I DON'T KNOW WHO YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT, AND SAXEGAARD IS IN HIS FORTRESS FIVE DAYS' RIDE FROM HERE.



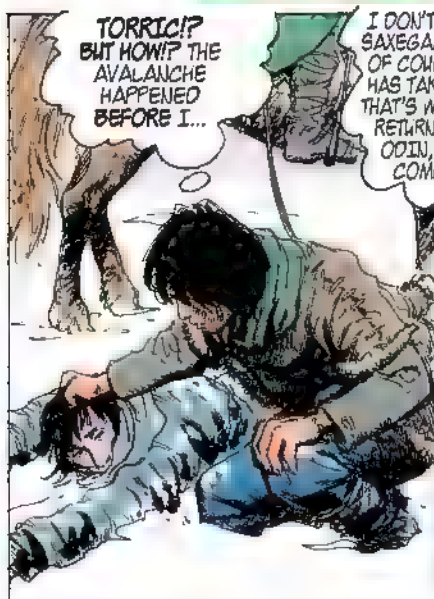
IN HIS? ... BUT HE WAS HERE JUST A FEW HOURS AGO, WITH THREE OF HIS MEN? AND YOU'RE RIDING THEIR HORSES.

IMPOSSIBLE. APART FROM US THREE, NONE OF OUR MEN HAS BEEN IN THIS AREA FOR MONTHS.



OH AND HIM?

THAT? NOTHING IMPORTANT ONE OF OUR SLAVES WHO HAD ESCAPED AND GOT CAUGHT IN AN AVALANCHE. I'LL TAKE HIS BODY BACK AS AN EXAMPLE.



TORRICI? BUT HOW? THE AVALANCHE HAPPENED BEFORE I...

I DON'T UNDERSTAND A THING AND SAXEGAARD, THEN? ... THE OTHER ONE, OF COURSE... THE REAL SAXEGAARD HAS TAKEN HIS PLACE AGAIN. THAT'S WHY VLANA COULD RETURN HOME... BY ODIN, IT'S ALL SO COMPLICATED!



BUT HOW DO YOU KNOW MY NAME, GEIRROED? AND WHO TOLD YOU THAT YOU'D FIND ME HERE?

SAXEGAARD, OF COURSE. BUT DON'T ASK ME ANY MORE. I WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO ANSWER YOU





ONE LAST QUESTION, THOUGH: WHY HAVE YOU BURNED DOWN THESE RUINS?



HOW DO YOU EXPECT ME TO KNOW? BECAUSE I WAS ORDERED TO, QUITE SIMPLY. WE HAVE TO LEAVE NOW.

I NEARLY FORGOT... SAXEGAARD GAVE ME A MESSAGE FOR YOU...



TIME MUST REMAIN IN THE REALM OF THE GODS. THAT'S ALL. IT WOULD SEEM THAT YOU'D UNDERSTAND. FAREWELL, THORGAL.



IF ONLY YOU COULD SPEAK... COME ON—LET'S GO BEFORE MY HEAD EXPLODES.



SO?

ALL WENT AS YOU ORDERED. HE DOESN'T KNOW YOU'RE HERE. BUT HE ASKED ME A LOT OF QUESTIONS.



IN PARTICULAR, ABOUT A YOUNG WOMAN, A CERTAIN VLAVA.

YES, I KNOW. THAT'S NOT IMPORTANT...







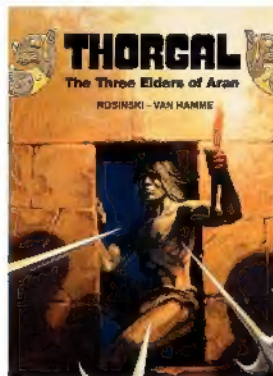


# THORCAL

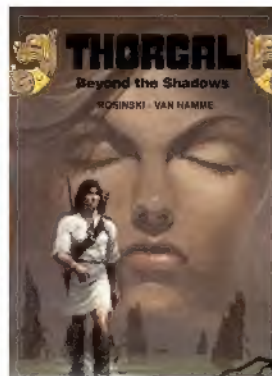
THE GODS HAVE PUT A MAN  
TO THE TEST



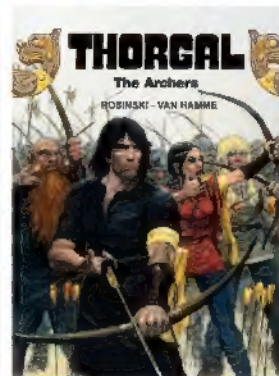
❶ Child of the Stars  
*Incl. Aaricia*



❷ The Three Elders of Aran  
*Incl. The Black Galley*



❸ Beyond the Shadows  
*Incl. The Fall of Brek Zarith*



❹ The Archers  
*Incl. Alinoe*



❺ The Land of Qa  
*Incl. The Eyes of Tanatloc*



❻ City of the Lost God  
*Incl. Between Earth and Sun*



❼ The Master of the Mountains



❽ Wolf Cub



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